

SELECTIONS FROM TENNYSON.

PART II.



Selections from Tennyson

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WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

By F. J. ROWE, M.A., AND W. T. WEBB, M.A.,

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Biography. I. Tennyson the man: 1. His sense of Law shown in his conceptions of (a) Nature; (b) Freedom; (c) Love; (d) Scenery. 2. His nobility of thought, and his religion. 3. His simplicity of emotion. II. Tennyson the Poet: 1. As Representative of his Age. 2. As Artist: (a) His observation; (b) His scholarship; (c) His expressiveness; (d) His similes; (e) His avoidance of the commonplace; (f) His repetition and assonance; (g) His harmony of rhythm; (h) His melody of diction. His dramatic works. Conclusion.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON, was born on August 6th, Biography. 1809, at Somersby, a village in Lincolnshire, of which his father was rector. The wolds surrounding his home, the fen some miles away, with its "level waste" and "trenched waters," and the sea on the Lincolnshire coast, with "league-long rollers" and "table-shore," are pictured again and again in his poems.

When he was seven years old he was sent to the Louth Grammar School, and returning home after a few years there, was educated with his elder brother Charles by his father, Charles and Alfred Tennyson, while yet youths, published in 1827 a small volume of poetry entitled *Poems by Two Brothers*. In 1828 the two brothers entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where Alfred gained the University Chancellor's gold

medal for a poem on *Timbuctoo*, and where he formed an intimate friendship with Arthur Henry Hallam (son of the historian), whose memory he has immortalised in *In Memoriam*. Among his other Cambridge friends may be mentioned R. C. Trench (afterwards Archbishop of Dublin), Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton), J. M. Kemble (the Anglo-Saxon scholar), Merivale (the historian, afterwards Dean of Ely), James Spedding, and W. H. Brookfield. In 1830 Tennyson published his *Poems*, chiefly *Lyrical*, among which are to be found some sixty pieces that are preserved in the present issues of his works. In 1832 *Poems by Alfred Tennyson* appeared, and then, after an interval of ten years, two more volumes, also with the title *Poems*. His reputation as a poet was now established, though his greatest works were yet to come. Chief among these are *The Princess* (1847), *In Memoriam* (1850), *Maud* (1855), *Idylls of the King* (1859-1885), and *Enoch Arden* (1864). In 1875 Tennyson published his first drama, *Queen Mary*, followed by *Harold* (1877), *The Cup* (acted in 1881), *The Promise of May* (1882), *The Falcon* and *Becket* (1884), and *The Foresters* (1892). On the death of Wordsworth in 1850, Tennyson succeeded him as Poet Laureate. In 1884 he was gazetted Baron of Aldworth and Farringford, his two seats in Sussex and in the Isle of Wight. He died on October 6th, 1892, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, near the grave of Browning.

I. Tennyson
the man :

I. Of all modern English poets Tennyson has most readers; and the chief elements of the powerful charm which he exercises over the hearts and minds of all English-speaking peoples will be evident on even a brief

survey of the character of his mind as revealed in his works, and of the matter and the form of his verse. At the basis of all Tennyson's teaching, indeed of all his work, is Tennyson *the man*. The mould of a poet's mind is the mould in which his thoughts and even his modes of expression must run, and the works of a poet cannot be fully understood unless we understand the poet himself.

1. Conspicuous among the main currents of thought and feeling that flow through the body of his writings is his perception of the movement of Law throughout the worlds of sense and of spirit: he recognises therein a settled scheme of great purposes underlying a universal order and gradually developing to completion.

(a) Illustrations of this recognition of pervading Law may be found in his conception of Nature, and in his treatment of human action and of natural scenery. Nature, which to Shelley was a spirit of Love, and to Wordsworth a living and speaking presence of Thought, is to Tennyson a process of Law including both. Even in the midst of his mourning over the seeming waste involved in the early death of his friend, he can write in *In Memoriam*

I curse not nature, no, nor death;
For nothing is that errs from law.

In all the workings of Nature he traces the evolution of the great designs of God:

That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves.

In *The Higher Pantheism*, a similar thought is found:

God is law, say the wise; O soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law, the thunder is yet His voice.

(b) Freedom: (b) Allied to this faith that the universe is "roll'd round by one fixt law" is the poet's sympathy with disciplined order in the various spheres of human action. In his teaching on social and political questions, his ideal is a majestic order, a gradual and regular development, without rest indeed, but, above all, without haste. His ideal Freedom is "sober-suited"; it is such a Freedom as has been evolved by the gradual growth of English institutions, a Freedom which

slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent.

He has small faith in sudden outbursts of revolutionary fervour; he thinks that the "red fool fury of the Seine" (alluding to the excesses of the French revolutionaries), the "flashing heats" of the "frantic city," retard man's progress towards real liberty: they "but fire to blast the hopes of men." If liberty is to be a solid and lasting possession, it must be gained by patient years of working and waiting, not by "expecting all things in an hour"; for with him "raw Haste" is but "half-sister to Delay." So also Tennyson's love for his own country is regulated and philosophic: he has given us a few patriotic martial lyrics that stir the living blood "like a trumpet call," as *The Charge of the Light Brigade* and *The Revenge*, but in the main his patriotism is founded on admiration for the great "storied past" of England. Though in youth he triumphs in "the Vision of the world and all the wonder that would be,"

yet neither in youth nor in age is he himself without some distrust of the new democratic forces which may end in "working their own doom":—

Step by step we gain'd a freedom known to Europe, known
to all,

Step by step we rose to greatness—thro' the tonguesters we
may fall.

(c) Again, in his conception of the passion of Love, ^{(c) Love,} and in his portraiture of Womanhood, the same spirit of reverence and self-control animates Tennyson's verse. Love, in Tennyson, is a pure unselfish passion. Even the guilty love of Lancelot and Guinevere is described from a spiritual standpoint, in its evil effects rather than in any sensuous detail. His highest ideal of love is found in the pure passion of wedded life: true love can exist only under the sanction of Duty and of Reverence for womanhood and one's higher self; and such love is the source of man's loftiest ideas, and the inspiration of his noblest deeds. Examples of this treatment may be seen in *The Miller's Daughter*, *Enoch Arden*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, and *Guinevere*, and it underlies the moral lessons inculcated in *The Princess*.

(d) Lastly, Tennyson's appreciation of Order is illus- ^{(d) Scenery,} trated in his treatment of natural scenery. It is true that he sometimes gives us scenes of savage grandeur, as in

the monstrous ledges slope and spill

Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,

but he oftener describes still English landscapes, the "haunts of ancient peace," with "plaited alleys" and "terrace lawn," "long, gray fields," "tracts of pasture sunny-warm," and all the ordered quiet of rural life.

(2) His nobility of thought, and his religion.

2. A second great element of Tennyson's character is its noble tone. This is present in every poem he has ever written. His verse is informed with the very spirit of Honour, of Duty, and of Reverence for all that is pure and true. This is the spirit that animates the famous passage in *Enone* :

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power (power of herself
Would come uncalled for), but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.

It is illustrated on its negative side in *The Palace of Art*; it breathes through his noble *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, and it pervades and inspires his picture of King Arthur in the *Idylls of the King*.

Tennyson's religious faith is sufficiently indicated in his writings. At the root of his poetry (as Mr. Stopford Brooke has remarked) lie "the ever-working immanence of God in man, the brotherhood of the human race, and its evolution into perfect love and righteousness; the continuance of each man's personal consciousness in the life to be; the vitality of the present—man alive and Nature alive, and alive with the life of God."

(3) His simplicity of emotion.

3. Another main characteristic of Tennyson is simplicity. The emotions that he appeals to are generally easy to understand and common to all. He avoids the subtle analysis of character, and the painting of complex motives or of the wild excess of passion. The moral laws which he so strongly upholds are those primary sanctions upon which average English society is founded.

A certain Puritan simplicity and a scholarly restraint pervade the mass of his work.

It is on these foundations of Order, Nobility, and Simplicity that Tennyson's character is built.

II. Turning now to the matter or substance of his poems, we note, first, that the two chief factors of Tennyson's popularity are that he is a representative English poet, and that he is a consummate Artist.

II. Tennyson
the Poet:

1. In the great spheres of human thought—in religion, in morals, in social life—his poems reflect the complex tendencies of his age and his surroundings. Not, it may be, the most advanced ideas, not the latest speculation, not the transient contentions of the hour; but the broad results of culture and experience upon the poet's English contemporaries. The ground of Tennyson's claim to be considered a representative of his age is seen in the lines of thought pursued in some of those more important poems which deal with the great problems and paramount interests of his times. The poems cover a period of fifty years, and must be considered in the order of their publication. In *Locksley Hall*, published in 1842, the speaker, after giving vent to his own tale of passion and regret, becomes the mouthpiece of the young hopes and aspirations of the Liberalism of the early Victorian era, while in *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, the doubts and distrust felt by the Conservatism of our own times find dramatic utterance. *The Princess* deals with a question of lasting interest to society, and one which has of late years risen into more conspicuous importance, the changing position and proper sphere of Woman. In *The Palace of Art* the poet describes and

(1) As Representative of
his Age;

condemns a spirit of æstheticism whose sole religion is the worship of Beauty and Knowledge for their own sakes, and which ignores human responsibility and obligations to one's fellow-men: while in *St. Simeon Stylites*, the poet equally condemns the evils of a self-centred religious asceticism which despises the active duties of daily life. *The Vision of Sin* is a picture of the perversion of nature and of the final despair which attend the pursuit of sensual pleasure. *The Two Voices* illustrates the introspective self-analysis with which the age discusses the fundamental problem of existence, finding all solutions vain except those dictated by the simplest voices of the conscience and the heart. The poet's great work, *In Memoriam*, is the history of a tender human soul confronted with the stern, relentless order of the Universe and the seeming waste and cruelty of Death. The poem traces the progress of sorrow from the Valley of Death, over-shadowed by the darkness of unspeakable loss, through the regions of philosophic doubt and meditation to the serene heights of resignation and hope, where Faith and Love can triumph over Death in the confident hope of a life beyond, and over Doubt by the realization

That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil cooperant to an end.

Maud is dated at the conclusion of that long period of peace which ended at the Crimean War, when the commercial prosperity of England had reached a height unknown before, and when "Britain's sole god" was the millionaire. The poem gives a dramatic ren-

dering of the revolt of a cultured mind against the hypocrisy and corruptions of a society degraded by the worship of Mammon, though the hero inherits a vein of insanity and speaks too bitterly. The teaching of Tennyson's longest, and in many respects greatest poem—the spreading mischief of a moral taint—is discussed at length in the Introduction to *The Coming of Arthur and the Passing of Arthur*.¹ Here too Tennyson expresses one of the deepest convictions of his time.

2. But if Tennyson's popularity is based upon a (2) As Artist, correspondence between his own reverence for Law and the deepest foundations of English character, it is based no less upon his delicate power as an Artist. Among the elements of this power may be mentioned (a) a minute observation of Nature, which furnishes him with a store of poetic description and imagery; (b) a scholarly appreciation of all that is most picturesque in the literature of the past; (c) an exquisite precision in the use of words and phrases; (d) the picturesqueness and the aptness of his similes; (e) an avoidance of the commonplace; (f) his use of repetition and of assonance; (g) the expressive harmonies of his rhythm, and (h) the subtle melody of his diction.

(a) For minute observation and vivid painting of the details of natural scenery Tennyson is without a rival. (a) His observation; We feel that he has seen all that he describes. This may be illustrated by a few examples of his tree-studies:

hair

In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides three-fold to show the fruit within

(*The Brook*)

¹ Macmillan and Co.

those eyes
 Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair
 More black than ashbuds in the front of March
(The Gardener's Daughter)

With blasts that blow the poplar white
(In Memoriam)

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime
(Maud)

a stump of oak half-dead,
 From roots like some black coil of carven snakes,
 Clutch'd at the crag *(The Last Tournament).*

We may also notice the exactness of the epithets in "perky larches," "dry-tongu'd laurels," "high-elbow'd grigs," "pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores," "laburnums, dropping-wells of fire."

Equally exact are his descriptions of scientific phenomena :

Before the little ducts began
 To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
 Their course till thou wert also man
(The Two Voices)

Still, as while Saturn whirls, his steadfast shade
 Sleeps on his luminous ring
(The Palace of Art).

This accurate realization of natural or scientific facts is often of service in furnishing apt illustrations of moral truths or of emotions of the mind :

Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears
 That grief has shaken into frost
(In Memoriam)

Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke
 That like a broken purpose waste in air
(The Princess)

Prayer, from a living source within the will,
And beating up through all the bitter world,
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea

(*Enoch Arden*).

(b) Allusions to the Classics of more than one land may be found in Tennyson. Lines and expressions would seem sometimes to be suggested by the Greek or Latin poets, and in these the translation is generally so happy a rendering of the original as to give an added grace to what was already beautiful. Illustrations of this characteristic will be found among the Notes at the end of this volume. There is occasionally a reconditeness about these allusions which may puzzle the general reader. For example, in the lines

And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo

(*In Memoriam*)

where the reference is to the projection of the frontal bone above the eye-brows noticeable in the portraits of Michael Angelo and of Arthur Hallam, a peculiarity of shape said to indicate strength of character and mental power. Similarly in

Proxy-wedded with a bootless calf

(*The Princess*)

we find an allusion to an old ceremony of marriage by proxy, where an ambassador or agent representing the absent bridegroom, after taking off his long riding-boot, placed his leg in the bridal bed.

(c) We may next note Tennyson's unequalled power of finding single words to give at a flash, as it were,

(c) His expressiveness;

an exact picture. What he has written of Virgil's art is equally true of his own, which offers us

All the charm of all the Muses
often flowering in a lonely word.

This power of fitting the word to the thought may be seen in the following examples: "*creamy* spray"; "*lily* maid"; "the ripple *washing* in the reeds" and "the wild water *lapping* on the crag"; "the dying ebb that faintly *lipp'd* the flat red granite"; "as the fiery Sirius *bickers* into red and emerald"; "women *blow'd* with health and wind and rain."

(d) His
similes;

(d) Mr. G. C. Macaulay (Introduction to *Gareth and Lynette*) has remarked upon the picturesqueness, the elaborate aptness, and the individual and personal character of Tennyson's similes. Of their picturesque aptness two examples will be sufficient here:

The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea

(*Morte d'Arthur*)

Dust are our frames; and, gilded dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound;
Like that long-buried body of the king,
Found lying with his urns and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slipt into ashes, and was found no more

(*Aylmer's Field*).

As regards their individual and personal character, Tennyson's similes in many cases "do not so much

appeal to common experience, as bring before us some special thing or some peculiar aspect of nature, which the poet has vividly present to his own mind, while to the reader perhaps the picture suggested may be quite unfamiliar." As examples we may take the following :

So now that shadow of mischance appear'd
 No graver than as when some little cloud
 Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
 And isles a light in the ofting
 (*Enoch Arden*).

So, in *Geraint and Enid*, when the bandit falls transfixed by Geraint's lance, Tennyson writes :

As he that tells the tale
 Saw once a great piece of a promontory,
 That had a sapling growing on it, slide
 From the long shore-cliff's windy walls to the beach,
 And there lie still, and yet the sapling grew.

A remarkable instance of this individuality occurs in *Gareth and Lynette* :

Gareth lookt and read—
 In letters like to those the vexillary
 Hath left crag-carven o'er the streaming Gelt:—

the Gelt being a small stream in Cumberland, not named in any of the ordinary gazetteers or atlases; and the reference is to an inscription on a lime-stone rock near this stream, carved by the Second Legion of Augustus, stationed there in A.D. 207.

(e) Possessing such a faculty of appropriate expression, the poet naturally avoids the commonplace: he not only rigidly excludes all otiose epithets and stop-gap phrases, but often, where other writers would use

(e) His avoidance of the commonplace;

some familiar, well-worn word, he selects one less known but equally true and expressive. He has a distinct fondness for good old Saxon words and expressions, and has helped to rescue many of these from undeserved oblivion. Thus, for the "skinflint" of common parlance he substitutes (in *Walking to the Mail*) the "flayflint" of Ray's *Proverbs*; in place of "blindman's buff" is found the older "hoodman blind" (*In Memoriam*); for "village and cowshed" he writes "thorpe and byre" (*The Victim*), while in *The Brook* the French "cricket" appears as the Saxon "grig." Other examples might be quoted, e.g., *lurdane*, *rathe*, *plash*, *brewis*, *thrall'd*, *boles*, *quitch*, *reckling*, *roky*, *yaffingale*. Occasionally he prefers a word of his own coinage, as *tonguester*, *selfless*. This tendency to avoid the commonplace is noticeable not only in separate words, but in the rendering of ideas, a poetic dress being given to prosaic details by a kind of stately circumlocution: thus in *The Princess* the hero's northern birthplace is indicated by his telling us that "on my cradle shone the Northern star"; and, in the same poem, the blue smoke rising from household chimneys is described by "azure pillars of the hearth"—an expression which Mr. P. M. Wallace, in his edition of *The Princess*, aptly calls "almost reverent"; icebergs are "moving isles of winter"; while to picture the hour before the planet Venus had sunk into the sea, the poet writes:

Before the crimson-circled star
Had fall'n into her father's grave.

(f) His repetition and assonance;

(f) One of the leading characteristics of Tennyson's style is the repetition of a word (often in a modified

form) in the same or sometimes in a slightly different sense. We have, for instance :

Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd hands,
Shame on her own *garrulity garrulously*
(*Guinevere*)

and in the same poem,

The *maiden* passion for a *maid*;
to which we may add :

For ever *climbing* up the *climbing* wave
(*The Lotos-Eaters*)

Mouldering with the dull earth's *mouldering* sod
(*The Palace of Art*).

Assonance—the repetition not of a word but of a sound—is also a favourite device with Tennyson for giving a kind of epigrammatic force to a statement, as in

Even to *tipmost* lance and *topmost* helm
(*The Last Tournament*)

Thy Paynim bard
Had such a *mastery* of his *mystery*
That he could harp his wife up out of hell
(*Ib*)

Then with that *friendly-fienlly* smile of his
(*Harold*).

(g) Lastly, if we examine the metrical characteristics of Tennyson's poetry, we observe that the sense of majestic order and gradual development pervading the substance of his poems is not more conspicuous than is the sense of music which governs the style of his versification. While less powerful than Milton's at its best, Tennyson's blank verse always remains at a high level of excellence, and its simple grandeur of style and expression is peculiarly his own. It is in his

(g) His harmony of rhythm;

lyrical poems, however, that his mastery of metre and rhythm best shows itself. He knows all the secrets of harmonious measures and melodious diction; he has re-cast and polished his earlier poems with such minute and scrupulous care that he has at length attained a metrical form more perfect than has been reached by any other poet. Several illustrations of the delicacy of his sense of metre are pointed out in the Notes. A few more examples may be here quoted to show how frequently in his verse the sound echoes the sense. This is seen in his Representative Rhythms. Thus:

(1) The first syllable or half-foot of a line of blank verse is often accented and cut off from the rest of the line by a pause, to indicate some sudden emphatic action or startling sight or sound, breaking the flow of the narrative—an effect often employed by Homer:

his arms

Clash'd: and the sound was good to Gareth's ear

(*Gareth and Lynette*)

Charm'd, till Sir Kay, the seneschal, would come

(*Ib*)

Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive

(*Lancelot and Elaine*)

Flash'd, and he call'd, 'I fight upon thy side'

(*Pelleas and Etarre*)

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the leaf

(*Ib.*)

Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching wave

Drops flat

(*The Last Tournament*).

Occasionally the whole first foot is thus cut off:

made his horse

Caracole: then bowed his homage, bluntly saying

(*Ib.*)

Who stood a moment, ere his horse was brought,
 Glorifying: and in the stream beneath him shone
(Gareth and Lynette).

(2) Action rapidly repeated is represented by an unusual number of unaccented syllables in one line. Thus we almost hear the huddling flow of waters in such lines as

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn
(The Princess)

Of some precipitous rivulet to the sea
(Enoch Arden).

The rapid warble of song-birds sounds through

Melody on branch and melody in mid-air
(Gareth and Lynette)

and in the same *Idyll*, the quick beat of a horse's hoof is echoed in

The sound of many a heavily galloping hoof.

(3) Contrast with the above the majestic effect produced by the sustained rhythm and the broad vowel sounds in

By the long wash of Australasian seas
(The Brook)

The league-long roller thundering on the reef
(Enoch Arden).

(4) Variations from the usual iambic regularity of blank verse, attained by placing the accent on the first instead of on the second half-foot, are introduced, often to represent intermittent action, as in

Dówn the lóng tówer-stáirs, hésitátíng
(Lancelot and Elaine).

(h) His melody
of diction.

(h) Tennyson's sense of music is equally conspicuous in the melody of his diction. The mere sound of his words and phrases lingers in the brain, apart from any meaning, as the echoes of a musical cadence linger along a vaulted roof. This is in the main due to his selection of melodious vowels and liquid consonants, and also to his skilful use of alliteration. Examples are everywhere :

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees
(*The Princess*)

The lustre of the long convolvuluses
(*Enoch Arden*)

The long low dune and lazy plunging sea
(*The Last Tournament*)

Breast-high in that bright line of bracken stood
(*Pelleas and Etarre*)

All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone
Through every hollow cave and alley lone
(*The Lotos Eaters*).

Contrast with the liquid sounds in the above the representative effect produced by the short, sharp vowels and the guttural and dental sounds in

And on the *spike* that *split* the mother's heart
Spitting the child
(*The Coming of Arthur*)

The blade flew
Splintering in *six*, and *clinkt* upon the stones
(*Balin and Balan*)

Then *sputtering* thro' the *hedge* of *splinter'd* teeth,
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with *blunt stump*
*Pitch-black*en'd sawing the air
(*The Last Tournament*).

In double words initial alliteration is conspicuous:—*breaker-beaten, flesh-fall'n, gloomy-gladed, lady-laden, mock-meek, point-painted, rain-rotten, storm-strengthen'd, tongue-torn, work-wan.* We also find *slowly-mellowing, hollower-bellowing, ever-veering, heavy-shotted hammock-shroud.* Often, as Mr. G. C. Macaulay has noticed, Tennyson's alliteration is so delicate that we "only feel that it is there without perceiving where it is," and it is then, perhaps, due to no conscious effort of the poet, but is as natural as the melody of a bird. In no English poet, perhaps only in Homer and Virgil, is this kinship of poetry and music so evident as in Tennyson.

Tennyson's three historical dramas form (as Mr. Henry Van Dyke has pointed out) a picture of the Making of England, the three periods of action being, it would seem, chosen with the design of touching the most critical points of the long struggle. Thus in *Harold* we see "the close of that fierce triangular duel between the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans, which resulted in the Norman conquest and the binding of England, still Saxon at heart, to the civilization of the Continent." In *Becket* we have "the conflict between the church and the crown, between the ecclesiastical and the royal prerogatives, which shook England to the centre for many years, and out of which her present constitution has grown." In *Queen Mary*, when the triumph of church and people had left undecided what type of religion was to prevail, is pictured the struggle between the Papacy and the Reformation for the possession of England. All three plays are full of deep

His Dramatic
Works.

research, vivid character-painting, and intensity of feeling, and contain many magnificent situations. George Eliot has expressed her opinion that "Tennyson's plays run Shakspeare's close," and Robert Browning used to point out the scene of the oath over the bones of the Saints of Normandy, in *Harold*, as a marvellously actable scene; while Mr. J. R. Green, the historian, has told us that "all his researches into the annals of the twelfth century had not given him so vivid a conception of the character of Henry II. and his court as was embodied in Tennyson's *Becket*." It should at the same time be remembered that (as the poet himself avows) this drama is "not intended in its present form to meet the exigencies of the modern theatre," a criticism which may be applied with more or less force to the whole trilogy. *Becket* has been adapted for the stage by Mr. Irving, and performed with great success; and *The Cup* and *The Falcon* were each played during a London season to full houses. *Queen Mary*, *The Promise of May*, and *The Foresters* have also been acted.

Conclusion.

Such is Tennyson as man and as artist. His poetry, with its clearness of conception and noble simplicity of expression, its discernment of the beautiful and its power of revealing and shaping it with mingled strength and harmony, has become an integral part of the literature of the world, and so long as purity and loftiness of thought expressed in perfect form have power to charm, will remain a possession for ever.

SELECTIONS FROM TENNYSON.

ŒNONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus 10
Stands up and takes the morning : but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
Mournful Œnone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade 20
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :
The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
The purple flower droops : the golden bee
Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love, 30
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves
That house the cold crown'd snake ! O mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed, 40
A cloud that gather'd shape : for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy dark,
And dewy dark aloft the mountain pine :
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd, white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone. 51

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft :

Far up the solitary morning smote
 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes
 I sat alone : white-breasted like a star
 Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard skin
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
 Cluster'd about his temples like a God's :
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens
 When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart 61
 Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm
 Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
 That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd
 And listen'd, the full-flowing river of speech
 Came down upon my heart.

" My own Ænone,
 Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,
 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming riind ingrav'n 70
 ' For the most fair,' would seem to award it thine,
 As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
 The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
 Of movement, and the charm of married brows."

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
 And added " This was cast upon the board,
 When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
 Ranged in the halls of Peleus ; whereupon
 Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due : 80
 But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
 Delivering, that to me, by common voice
 Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
 Pallas and Aphroditè, claiming each
 This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
 Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,

Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

It was the deep midnight : one silvery cloud 90
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies : and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'. 100

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.

On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and lean'd
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom
Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue 110
Wherewith to embellish state, "from many a vale
And river-sunder'd champaign clothed with corn,
Or labour'd mine undrainable of ore.
Honour," she said, "and homage, tax and toll,
From many an inland town and haven large,
Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel
In glassy bays among her tallest towers."

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.

Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
"Which in all action is the end of all ; 120

Power fitted to the season ; wisdom-bred
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbour crowns
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
 From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss 130
 In knowledge of their own supremacy."

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power
 Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she stood
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek 140
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

. "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear ;
 And, because right is right, to follow right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

' Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Again she said : "I woo thee not with gifts. 150
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,

If gazing on divinity disrobed

Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
 Unbias'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
 So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
 To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom."

160

' Here she ceased,
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, "O Paris,
 Give it to Pallas!" but he heard me not,
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 And shoulder: from the violets her light foot
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

170

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, "I promise thee
 The fairest and most loving wife in Greece."
 She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my sight for fear:
 But when I look'd, Paris had raised his arm,
 And I beheld great Herès's angry eyes,
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
 And I was left alone within the bower;

180

And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die. 190

‘Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
Crouch’d fawning in the weed. Most loving is she?
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew 200
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My tall dark pines, that plumed the craggy ledge
High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Foster’d the callow eaglet—from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn
The panther’s roar came muffled, while I sat 210
Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Œnone see the morning mist
Sweep thro’ them; never see them overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruin’d folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her
The Abominable, that uninvited came 220
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change; that I might speak my mind,

And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,
In this green valley, under this green hill,
Ev’n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Seal’d it with kisses? water’d it with tears? 230
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,
There are enough unhappy on this earth,
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die. 240

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born: her child!—a shudder comes
Across me: never child be born of me, 250
Unblest, to vex me with his father’s eyes!

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of Death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go

Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
 Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
 A fire dances before her, and a sound 260
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
 What this may be I know not, but I know
 That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
 All earth and air seem only burning fire.'

THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
 I said, 'O Soul, make merry and carouse,
 Dear soul, for all is well.'

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd brass
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
 From level meadow-bases of deep grass
 Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair. 10
 My soul would live alone unto herself
 In her high palace there.

And 'while the world runs round and round,' I said,
 'Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his stedfast shade
 Sleeps on his luminous ring.'

To which my soul made answer readily :
 'Trust me, in bliss I shall abide

In this great mansion, that is built for me,
 So royal-rich and wide.' 20

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Four courts I made, East, West and South and North,
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there ran a row
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge to distant lands, 30
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one swell
 Across the mountain stream'd below
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
 A cloud of incense of all odour steam'd
 From out a golden cup. 40

So that she thought, 'And who shall gaze upon
 My palace with unblinded eyes,
 While this great bow will waver in the sun,
 And that sweet incense rise?'

For that sweet incense rose and never fail'd,
 And, while day sank or mounted higher,
 The light ærial gallery, golden-rail'd,
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd and traced,
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires 50
 From shadow'd grotts or arches interlaced,
 And tipt with frost-like spires.

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Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
 Thro' which the livelong day my soul did pass,
 Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,
 All various, each a perfect whole
 From living Nature, fit for every mood
 And change of my still soul. 60

For some were hung with arras green and blue
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter blew
 His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of sand,
 And some one pacing there alone,
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry waves.
 You seem'd to hear them climb and fall 70

And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing caves
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
And hoary to the wind.

80

And one a foreground black with stones and slags,
Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
All barr'd with long white cloud the scornful crags,
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there
Not less than truth design'd.

90

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Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

THE PALACE OF ART.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecilv :
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise
A group of Houris bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw 110
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian king to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward borne :
From one hand droop'd a crocus : one hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn. 120

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair
 Which the supreme Caucasian mind
 Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
 Not less than life, design'd.

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Then in the towers I placed great bells that swung,
 Moved of themselves, with silver sound ; 130
 And with choice paintings of wise men I hung
 The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
 .Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild ;
 And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd his song,
 And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest ;
 A million wrinkles carved his skin ;
 A hundred winters snow'd upon his breast,
 From cheek and throat and chin. 140

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
 Many an arch high up did lift,
 And angels rising and descending met
 With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
 With cycles of the human tale
 Of this wide world, the times of every land
 So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
 Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and stings ; 150

Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those great bells
Began to chime. She took her throne :
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

160

And thro' the topmost Oriels' coloured flame
Two godlike faces gazed below ;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion were
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd fair
In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes, 170
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon, drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,

Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth,
Lord of the senses five; 180

Communing with herself : 'All these are mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me.' She—when young night divine
Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands and cried,
'I marvel if my still delight - - 190
In this great house so royal-rich, and wide,
Be flatter'd to the height.

'O all things fair to sate my various eyes !
O shapes and hues that please me well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

'O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves of swine
That range on yonder plain. 200

'In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep ;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep.'

Then of the moral instinct would she prate
And of the rising from the dead,

As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate;
And at the last she said :

'I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl, 210
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all.'

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Full oft the riddle of the painful earth.
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd : so three years
She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell. 220

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she turn'd her sight
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote, 'Mene, mene,' and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born 230
Scorn of herself ; again, from out that mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

'What! is not this my place of strength,' she said,
'My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were laid
Since my first memory?'

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of blood,
And horrible nightmares, 240

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she came,
That stood against the wall.

~~A~~ spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand,
Left on the shore; that hears all night 250
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curl'd.
'No voice,' she shriek'd in that lone hall,
'No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this world :
One deep, deep silence all !' 260

She, mouldering with the dull earth's mouldering sod.
Inwraught tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere ;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time, 270
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea ; 280

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh, 'I have found
A new land, but I die.'

She howl'd aloud, 'I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die ?'

So when four years were wholly finished,
 She threw her royal robes away. 290
 'Make me a cottage in the vale,' she said,
 'Where I may mourn and pray.'

'Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are
 So lightly, beautifully built :
 Perchance I may return with others there
 When I have purged my guilt.'

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,
 '*The Legend of Good Women*,' long ago
 Sung by the morning star of song, who made
 His music heard below ;

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
 Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth
 With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his art
 Held me above the subject, as strong gales 10
 Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho' my heart,
 Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land
 I saw, wherever light illumineth,
 Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
 The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,
And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars ; 20

And clattering flints batter'd with clanging hoofs ;
And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries ;
And forms that pass'd at windows and on roofs
Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with heated blasts
That run before the fluttering tongues of fire ; 30
White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and masts,
And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates,
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,
And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when to land
Bluster the winds and tides the self-same way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,
Torn from the fringe of spray. 40

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove to speak,
As when a great thought strikes along the brain,
And flushes all the cheek,

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing thought
Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and did creep 50
Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd, and brought
Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd far
In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in coolest dew
The maiden splendours of the morning star
Shook in the stedfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and lean
Upon the dusky brushwood underneath
Their broad curved branches, fledged with clearest green,
New from its silken sheath. 60

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,
And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain,
Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turn'd
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree, 70
And at the root thro' lush green grasses burn'd
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I knew
The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drench'd in dew,
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Pour'd back into my empty soul and frame
The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame. 80

And from within me a clear under-tone
 Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unblissful clime,
 'Pass freely thro' : the wood is all thine own,
 Until the end of time.'

At length I saw a lady within call,
 Still'er than chisell'd marble, standing there ;
 A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
 And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
 Froze my swift speech : she turning on my face 90
 The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
 Spoke slowly in her place.

'I had great beauty : ask thou not my name :
 No one can be more wise than destiny.
 Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came
 I brought calamity.'

'No marvel, sovereign lady : in fair field
 Myself for such a face had boldly died,'
 I answer'd free ; and turning I appeal'd
 To one that stood beside. 100

But she with sick and scornful looks averse,
 To her full height her stately stature draws ;
 'My youth,' she said, 'was blasted with a curse :
 This woman was the cause.

'I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
 Which men call'd Aulis in those iron years :
 My father held his hand upon his face ;
 I, blinded with my tears,

'Still strove to speak : my voice was thick with sighs
 As in a dream. Dimly I could descry 110
 The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,
 Waiting to see me die.

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat ;
The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and the shore ;
The bright death quiver'd at the victim's throat ;
Touch'd ; and I knew no more.'

Whereto the other with a downward brow :

'I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam,
Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep below,
Then when I left my home.'

120

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence drear,
As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea :
Sudden I heard a voice that cried, 'Come here,
That I may look on thee.'

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd ;
A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,
Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began :

'I govern'd men by change, and so I sway'd
All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a man.
Once, like the moon, I made

130

'The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humour ebb and flow.

I have no men to govern in this wood :
That makes my only woe.

'Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not bend
One will ; nor tame and tutor with mine eye
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee, friend,
Where is Mark Antony ?

140

'The man, my lover, with whom I rode sublime
On Fortune's neck : we sat as God by God :
The Nilus would have risen before his time
And flooded at our nod.

'We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and lit
Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O my life
In Egypt! O the dalliance and the wit.
The flattery and the strife,

'And the wild kiss, when fresh from war's alarms
My Hercules, my Roman Antony, 150
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,
Contented there to die!

'And there he died: and when I heard my name
Sigh'd forth with life I would not brook my fear
Of the other: with a worm I balk'd his fame.
What else was left? look here!'

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half
The polish'd argent of her breast to sight
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a laugh,
Showing the aspick's bite.) 160

'I died a Queen. The Roman soldier found
Me lying dead, my crown about my brows,
A name for ever!—lying robed and crown'd,
Worthy a Roman spouse.'

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range
Struck by all passion, did fall down and glance
From tone to tone, and glided thro' all change
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for delight;
Because with sudden motion from the ground 170
She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd with light
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest darts;
As once they drew into two burning rings
All beams of Love, melting the mighty hearts
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard
A noise of some one coming thro' the lawn,
And singing clearer than the crested bird
That claps his wings at dawn. 180

'The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and soon,
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.

'The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with beams divine :
All night the splinter'd crags that wall the dell
With spires of silver shine.'

As one that museth where broad sunshine laves
The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the door 190
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and tied
To where he stands,—so stood I, when that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure ; as when she went along
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome light,
With timbrel and with song. 200

My words leapt forth : ' Heaven heads the count of crimes
With that wild oath.' She render'd answer high :

'Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand times
I would be born and die.

'Single I grew, like some green plant, whose root
Creeps to the garden water-pipes beneath,
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower to fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

‘ My God, my land, my father—these did move
 Me from my bliss of life, that Nature gave, 210
 Lower’d softly with a threefold cord of love
 Down to a silent grave.

‘ And I went mourning, “ No fair Hebrew boy
 Shall smile away my maiden blame among
 The Hebrew mothers”—emptied of all joy,
 Leaving the dance and song,

‘ Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
 Leaving the promise of my bridal bower,
 The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow
 Beneath the battled tower. 220

‘ The light white cloud swam over us. Anon
 We heard the lion roaring from his den ;
 We saw the large white stars rise one by one,
 Or, from the darken’d glen,

‘ Saw God divide the night with flying flame,
 And thunder on the everlasting hills.
 I heard Him, for He spake, and grief became
 A solemn scorn of ills.

‘ When the next moon was roll’d into the sky,
 Strength came to me that equall’d my desire. 230
 How beautiful a thing it was to die
 For God and for my sire !

‘ It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,
 That I subdued me to my father’s will ;
 Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
 Sweetens the spirit still.

‘ Moreover it is written that my race
 Hew’d Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer
 On Arnon unto Minneth.’ Here her face
 Glow’d, as I look’d at her. 240

She lock'd her lips : she left me where I stood :
 'Glory to God,' she sang, and past afar,
Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood,
 Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,
 As one that from a casement leans his head,
When midnight bells cease ringing suddenly,
 And the old year is dead.

'Alas ! alas !' a low voice, full of care,
 Murmur'd beside me : 'Turn and look on me : 250
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,
 If what I was I be.

'Would I had been some maiden coarse and poor !
 O me, that I should ever see the light !
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor
 Do hunt me, day and night.'

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and trust :
 To whom the Egyptian : 'O, you tamely died !
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist, and thrust
 The dagger thro' her side.' 260

With that sharp sound the white dawn's creeping beams,
 Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery
Of folded sleep. The captain of my dreams
 Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark,
 Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last trance
Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of Arc,
 A light of ancient France ;

Or her who knew that Love can vanquish Death,
 Who kneeling, with one arm about her king, 270
Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath,
 Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labours longer from the deep
 Gold-mines of thought to lift the hidden ore
 That glimpses, moving up, than I from sleep
 To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what dull pain
 Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to strike
 Into that wondrous track of dreams again !
 But no two dreams are like.

280

As when a soul laments, which hath been blest,
 Desiring what is mingled with past years,
 In yearnings that can never be exprest
 By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with choicest art,
 Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
 Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
 Faints, faded by its heat.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter sea ;
 Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
 Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
 King Arthur : then, because his wound was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chan~~cel~~ with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land.

10

On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere .

‘The sequel of to-day unsolders all

The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we

Shall never more, at any future time,

Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the halls

20

Of Camelot, as in the days that were.

I perish by this people which I made,—

Tho’ Merlin sware that I should come again

To rule once more—but let what will be, be,

I am so deeply smitten thro’ the helm

That without help I cannot last till morn.

Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,

Which was my pride : for thou rememberest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,

30

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

Holding the sword—and how I rowed across

And took it, and have worn it, like a king :

And, wheresoever I am sung or told

In aftertime, this also shall be known :

But now delay not : take Excalibur,

And fling him far into the middle mere :

Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :

‘It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,

40

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro’ the helm.

A little thing may harm a wounded man.

Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,

Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.’

So saying, from the ruin’d shrine he stept

And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock, 50
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt :
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood, 60
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave ?
What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds, 70
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale :
'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fæalty, nor like a noble knight :
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing 80
I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought ;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,
‘ And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done ?
What harm, undone ? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

90

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself ?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt ? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, “ King Arthur’s sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.”
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.

100

But now much honour and much fame were lost.’

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

110

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :
‘ What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ?’
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
‘ I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.’

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :

'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me ! 120
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence : 130
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock 140
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen ?' 150

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
 So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
 Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;
 But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 That caught him by the hilt and brandish'd him 160
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :
 'My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.
 Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
 And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
 My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
 Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
 And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
 As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere 170
 Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
 And would have spoken, but he found not words,
 Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
 O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
 And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
 Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
 When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
 Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick
 I fear it is too late, and I shall die.' 180
 But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
 Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
 Larger than human on the frozen hills.

He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
 Before. His own thought drove him, like a goad.
 Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
 And barren chasms, and all to left and right
 The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels— 190

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them ; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice an agony 200
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge,'
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands, *hel*
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud, 210
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east ;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust ;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King ; 221
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,

And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

270

SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,

My tough lance thrusteth sure,

My strength is as the strength of ten,

Because my heart is pure.

The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,

The hard brands shiver on the steel,

The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly

The horse and rider reel :

They reel, they roll in clanging lists,

And when the tide of combat stands,

Perfume and flowers fall in showers,

That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

10

How sweet are looks that ladies bend

On whom their favours fall !

For them I battle till the end,

To save from shame and thrall :

But all my heart is drawn above,

My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :

I never felt the kiss of love,

Nor maiden's hand in mine.

20

More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns :
Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
I hear a voice but none are there ; 30
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark
I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
I float till all is dark. 40
A gentle sound, an awful light !
Three angels bear the holy Grail :
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go, 50
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail ;

But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields. 60

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear, 70
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
'O just and faithful knight of God !
Ride on ! the prize is near.' 80
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

THE VOYAGE.

I.

We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbour-mouth ;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the South :
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore !
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail : 10
The Lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.
The broad sea swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind ; so quick the run,
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
And burn the threshold of the night,
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light ! 20
How oft the purple-skirted robe
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
As thro' the slumber of the globe
Again we dash'd into the dawn !

IV.

New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lighten'd into view ;
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.
Far ran the naked moon across
The houseless ocean's heaving field, 30
Or flying shone, the silver boss
Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
High towns on hills were dimly seen,
We past long lines of Northern capes
And dewy Northern meadows green.
We came to warmer waves, and deep
Across the boundless east we drove,
Where those long swells of breaker sweep
The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove. 40

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
Gloom'd the low coast and quivering brine
With ashy rains, that spreading made
Fantastic plume or sable pine ;
By sands and steaming flats, and floods
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark ! 50

At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;
 At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
 But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
 Down the waste waters day and night,
 And still we follow'd where she led,
 In hope to gain upon her flight. 60
 Her face was evermore unseen,
 And fixt upon the far sea-line ;
 But each man murmur'd, 'O my Queen,
 I follow till I make thee mine.'

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
 Like Fancy made of golden air,
 Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair
 Now high on waves that idly burst
 Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the sea, 70
 And now, the bloodless point reversed,
 She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us—him
 We pleased not—he was seldom pleased :
 He saw not far : his eyes were dim :
 But ours he swore were all diseased.
 'A ship of fools,' he shriek'd in spite,
 'A ship of fools,' he sneer'd and wept.

And overboard one stormy night
He cast his body, and on we swept 80

XI.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,
Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;
We lov'd the glories of the world,
But laws of nature were our scorn.
For blasts would rise and rave and cease,
But whence were those that drove the sail
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace
And to and thro' the counter gale ?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
For still we follow'd where she led : 90
Now mate is blind and captain lame,
And half the crew are sick or dead,
But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
We follow that which flies before :
We know the merry world is round,
And we may sail for evermore.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.

(IN ENNA.)

FAINT as a climate-changing bird that flies
All night across the darkness, and at dawn
Falls on the threshold of her native land,
And can no more, thou camest, O my child,
Led upward by the God of ghosts and dreams,
Who laid thee at Eleusis, dazed and dumb

With passing thro' at once from state to state,
 Until I brought thee hither, that the day,
 When here thy hands let fall the gather'd flower,
 Might break thro' clouded memories once again 10
 On thy lost self. A sudden nightingale
 Saw thee, and flash'd into a frolic of song
 And welcome; and a gleam as of the moon,
 When first she peers along the tremulous deep,
 Fled wavering o'er thy face, and chased away
 That shadow of a likeness to the king
 Of shadows, thy dark mate. Persephone!
 Queen of the dead no more—my child! Thine eyes
 Again were human-godlike, and the Sun
 Burst from a swimming fleece of winter gray, 20
 And robed thee in his day from head to feet—
 'Mother!' and I was folded in thine arms.

Child, those imperial, disimpassion'd, eyes
 Awed even me at first, thy mother—eyes
 That oft had seen the serpent-wanded power
 Draw downward into Hades with his drift
 Of flickering spectres, lighted from below
 By the red race of fiery Phlegethon;
 But when before have Gods or men beheld
 The Life that had descended re-arise, 30
 And lighted from above him by the Sun?
 So mighty was the mother's childless cry,
 A cry that rang thro' Hades, Earth, and Heaven!

So in this pleasant vale we stand again,
 The field of Enna, now once more ablaze
 With flowers that brighten as thy footstep falls,
 All flowers—but for one black blur of earth
 Left by that closing chasm, thro' which the car
 Of dark Aïdoneus rising rapt thee hence.

And here, my child, tho' folded in thine arms, 40
I feel the deathless heart of motherhood
Within me shudder, lest the naked glebe
Should yawn once more into the gulf, and thence
The shrilly whinnings of the team of Hell,
Ascending, pierce the glad and songful air,
And all at once their arch'd necks, midnight-maned,
Jet upward thro' the mid-day blossom. No!
For, see, thy foot has touch'd it; all the space
Of blank earth-baldness clothes itself afresh,
And breaks into the crocus-purple hour 50
That saw thee vanish.

Child, when thou wert gone,
I envied human wives, and nested birds,
Yea, the cubb'd lioness; went in search of thee
Thro' many a palace, many a cot, and gave
Thy breast to ailing infants in the night,
And set the mother waking in amaze
To find her sick one whole; and forth again
Among the wail of midnight winds, and cried,
'Where is my loved one? Wherefore do ye wail?'
And out from all the night an answer shrill'd, 60
'We know not, and we know not why we wail.'
I climb'd on all the cliffs of all the seas,
And ask'd the waves that moan about the world
'Where? do ye make your moaning for my child?'
And round from all the world the voices came
'We know not, and we know not why we moan.'
'Where?' and I stared from every eagle-peak,
I thridded the black heart of all the woods,
I peer'd thro' tomb and cave, and in the storms
Of Autumn swept across the city, and heard 70
The murmur of their temples chanting me,
Me, me, the desolate Mother! 'Where'?—and turn'd,
And fled by many a waste, forlorn of man,

And grieved for man thro' all my grief for thee,—
 The jungle rooted in his shatter'd hearth,
 The serpent coil'd about his broken shaft,
 The scorpion crawling over naked skulls ;—
 I saw the tiger in the ruin'd fane
 Spring from his fallen God, but trace of thee
 I saw not ; and far on, and, following out 80
 A league of labyrinthine darkness, came
 On three gray heads beneath a gleaming rift.
 'Where'? and I heard one voice from all the three
 'We know not, for we spin the lives of men,
 And not of Gods, and know not why we spin!
 There is a Fate beyond us.' Nothing knew.

Last as the likeness of a dying man,
 Without his knowledge, from him flits to warn
 A far-off friendship that he comes no more,
 So he, the God of dreams, who heard my cry, 90
 Drew from thyself the likeness of thyself
 Without thy knowledge, and thy shadow past
 Before me, crying 'The Bright one in the highest
 Is brother of the Dark one in the lowest,
 And Bright and Dark have sworn that I, the child
 Of thee, the great Earth-Mother, thee, the Power
 That lifts her buried life from gloom to bloom,
 Should be for ever and for evermore
 The Bride of Darkness.'

So the Shadow wail'd.
 Then I, Earth-Goddess, cursed the Gods of Heaven.
 I would not mingle with their feasts ; to me 101
 Their nectar smack'd of hemlock on the lips,
 Their rich ambrosia tasted aconite.
 The man, that only lives and loves an hour,
 Seem'd nobler than their hard Eternities.

My quick tears kill'd the flower, my ravings hush'd
The bird, and lost in utter grief I fail'd
To send my life thro' olive-yard and vine
And golden grain, my gift to helpless man.
Rain-rotten died the wheat, the barley-spears 110
Were hollow-husk'd, the leaf fell, and the sun,
Pale at my grief, drew down before his time
Sickening, and Ætna kept her winter snow.

Then He, the brother of this Darkness, He
Who still is highest, glancing from his height
On earth a fruitless fallow, when he miss'd
The wonted steam of sacrifice, the praise
And prayer of men, decreed that thou should'st dwell
For nine white moons of each whole year with me,
Three dark ones in the shadow with thy King. 120

Once more the reaper in the gleam of dawn
Will see me by the landmark far away,
Blessing his field, or seated in the dusk
Of even, by the lonely threshing-floor,
Rejoicing in the harvest and the grange.

Yet I, Earth-Goddess, am but ill-content
With them, who still are highest. Those gray heads,
What meant they by their 'Fate beyond the Fates'
But younger kindlier Gods to bear us down,
As we bore down the Gods before us? Gods, 130
To quench, not hurl the thunderbolt, to stay,
Not spread the plague, the famine; Gods indeed,
To send the noon into the night and break
The sunless halls of Hades into Heaven?
Till thy dark lord accept and love the Sun,
And all the Shadow die into the Light,
When thou shalt dwell the whole bright year with me,
And souls of men, who grew beyond their race,
And made themselves as Gods against the fear 139
Of Death and Hell; and thou that hast from men,
As Queen of Death, that worship which is Fear,

Henceforth, as having risen from out the dead,
Shalt ever send thy life along with mine
From buried grain thro' springing blade, and bless
Their garner'd Autumn also, reap with me,
Earth-mother, in the harvest hymns of Earth
The worship which is Love, and see no more
The Stone, the Wheel, the dimly-glimmering lawns
Of that Elysium, all the hateful fires
Of torment, and the shadowy warrior glide 150
Along the silent field of Asphodel.

NOTES.

CENONE.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS poem was first published in 1832. According to Classical Mythology, Cenone was the daughter of the river-god Kebren (*Κεβρήν*), and was married to Paris, son of Priam, King of Troy, but was deserted by him for Helen, wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta. The abduction of Helen from Sparta came about in the following way. On the occasion of the marriage of Peleus to the Nereid Thetis, the Gods were invited to the nuptial banquet, and brought with them various wedding presents. Eris, the Goddess of Strife, enraged at not having received an invitation, threw on the banqueting table an apple of gold, with this inscription cut on its rind, "For the fairest." Thereupon the goddesses Herè, Pallas Athenè, and Aphroditè each claimed the apple for herself. Zeus ordered Hermes to take the claimants disrobed before Paris on Mt. Gargarus, part of Mt. Ida, and there ask his decision. On appearing before Paris, the goddesses tried to influence his judgment by the offer of bribes. Herè promised him great wealth and the sovereignty of Asia, Pallas great glory and renown in war, while Aphroditè said she would give him the fairest of women for a wife. Paris without hesitation decided the dispute in favour of Aphroditè, and gave her the apple. Under her protection he then deserted Cenone, and sailed to Sparta, whence he carried off Helen to Troy; the Trojan war, in which all the kings and chiefs of Greece joined for the recovery of Helen, followed.

Tennyson's poem opens with a description of a valley in Ida. This was the name of the great mountain range of Mysia, forming

the south boundary of the territory of Troas or Ilium. [It was among the valleys of this mountain that Paris had been brought up, after having been cast away there as a baby owing to a dream that his mother had that her child would bring ruin on Troy. Paris was preserved by the shepherds, who taught him their craft, and hence he is often called the 'Idæan shepherd.' He subsequently was restored to his father at Troy.] C  none comes to this valley in grief at her desertion by Paris, describes the appearance of the three goddesses before Paris, and his award; and, after wishing for death, resolves to go down to Troy and there consult the prophetess Cassandra, Paris's sister, as to what vengeance she can take on her faithless husband. Such is the substance of Tennyson's poem. The myths relate that C  none subsequently had an opportunity of revenge. At the capture of Troy by the Greeks, Paris was wounded by Philoctetes, who shot him with one of the poisoned arrows obtained from Hercules. Paris now returned to his neglected C  none, and besought her to apply to his wound a sure remedy, which she alone possessed. C  none refused, and Paris returned in agony to Troy. C  none quickly repented, and hastened after her husband, but reached Troy only to find him dead. She then in remorse hanged herself.

Mr. Churton Collins, in his *Illustrations of Tennyson*, draws attention to a general resemblance existing between Beattie's *Judgment of Paris* and Tennyson's poem.

Critics have called attention to the absence of the genuine antique spirit from this poem. And it is, no doubt, observable that Tennyson's representation of C  none's character contains little or no suggestion of that bitter resentment and implacable vengeance which a poet of ancient Greece would have thought it correct from both a moral and an artistic standpoint to instil into her words. In making C  none tell her tale more in sorrow than in anger, Tennyson has appealed to the more modern, more Christian idea—

‘To err is human, to forgive divine.’

However modern in spirit the poem as a whole may appear, this detracts nothing from the beauty of its form, from the ruddy splendour or the pure severity of the colouring, from the music of the cadences and of the rhythm, and nothing from the ‘weight of thought weightily expressed,’ as in the speech of Her  .

NOTES.

1. *Ida*, the mountain chain in Mysia which formed the south boundary of the district of Troas or Ilium. Its highest summits were C  tylus on the north, and Gargarus (about 5,000 feet high) on the south. Its upper slopes were well-wooded, while lower down were fertile fields and valleys; here were the sources of the rivers Granicus, Scamander, and Aesepus, and of many smaller streams. Hence the epithet ‘many-fountain’d’ *Ida*.

2. **Ionian hills.** Ionia was the district next to Mysia. *Ionian* may here be loosely used for 'neighbouring.'

3. **swimming vapour**, mist slowly drifting; cf. *The Two Voices*, 262 :—

"High up the vapours fold and swim."

4. **Puts forth an arm**, projects a narrow strip of vapour, as a swimmer puts forward his arm from pine to pine. The pine woods on Mt. Ida are mentioned by Homer, as in *Iliad*, xiv. 287:

Εἰς ἐλάτῃν ἀναβὰς περιμήκετον, ἥ τότε ἐν Ἰδῇ—

"mounted on a lofty pine,
The tallest growth in Ida."

9. **In cataract after cataract.** The additional syllable in the first foot and in the third represent the repeated splash and motion of falling waters. Scan thus :—

In cata|ract aft|er cata|ract to | the sea.

10. **topmost Gargarus**, a classical idiom; cf. Lat. *summus mons*, 'topmost mountain,' or 'the top of the mountain'

11. **takes the morning**, catches the first beams of the morning sun.

13. **Troas**, or 'the Troad,' the district surrounding the city of Troy.

14. **The crown of Troas**, the chief ornament and glory of Troas.

15, 16. **forlorn Of Paris.** Cf. *Demeter*, 73, "forlorn of man," and Milton, *Par. Lost*, x. 921 :—

"Forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?"

16. **once her playmate.** In his boyhood Paris had lived on Ida with the shepherds. See Introduction.

17. **the rose**, i.e. its usual bloom. Cf. Bion, *Epitaph Adon.*, 11, καὶ τὸ ῥόδον φεύγει τῷ χεῖλεος, 'and the rose of his lip flies.' Also Shaks. *Mid. N. D.* i. 1. 129 :—

"why is your cheek so pale,
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?"

18. **or seem'd to float in rest**, or, though not in motion, seemed to move on the air, implying that it was loose and wavy.

19. **fragment**, part of a fallen rock. Cf. below, 218, "Among the fragments, tumbled from the glens"; and *Lancelot and Anna*, 1126, "Among the tumbled fragments of the hills."

20. **to the stillness**, speaking to the silent landscape around.

20, 21. **till cliff**, until the sun had sunk behind the hill, whose shadow crept gradually lower so as at last to reach the spot where Cenone was.

22. **mother Ida.** The earth and the mountains were often

addressed as 'mother,' by a kind of personification, in Greek: cf. our 'mother country,' 'fatherland.' many-fountain'd. A translation of Homer's permanent epithet of Ida: cf. "Ἰδην πολυπίδακα, *Iliad*, viii. 47. In *Iliad*, xiii. 20, 23, these numerous fountains are mentioned by name.

A *refrain* (i.e. a verse or verses repeated at intervals throughout a poem) is a striking characteristic of Theocritus and other Greek idyllic poets. Cf. the "Begin, dear muse, begin the woodland song" of Theocritus, which is repeated at the head of each fresh paragraph.

24. the noonday quiet. Cf. Callimachus, *Lavacrum Palladis*, μεσαμερινά δ' εἶχ' ὄρος ἀσυχία, 'but the noonday quiet held the hill.' Also Theocritus, *Id.* ii. 37, 38:—

ἦνίδε σιγῇ μὲν πόντος, σιγῶντι δ' ἀῆται·
ἀ δ' ἐμὰ οὐ σιγῇ στέρνων ἔντοσθεν ἀνία.

"Lo, silent is the sea, silent the winds,
Not silent is my wretched heart within."

26. The lizard etc. Cf. Theocritus, *Id.* vii. 22, σᾶυρος ἐφ' αἰμασιᾶσι καθέυδει, 'the lizard sleeps on the wall.'

27. and the winds are dead. This reading has been substituted in the latest editions for 'and the cicala sleeps.'

30. my eyes ... love. Cf. Shaks. 2 *Hen.* VI, ii. 3. 17:—

"Mine eyes are full of tears, my heart of grief."

32. I am all aweary, etc. Cf. Shaks. *Macbeth*, v. 5. 49:—

"I gin to be aweary of the sun."

36. cold crown'd. Cf. Theocritus, *Id.* xv. 58, τὸν ψυχρὸν ὄφιν, 'the cold snake'; also the word *basilisk*, literally 'the little king,' a snake with a hood like that of the cobra, supposed to resemble a king's crown. The crowns of snakes are often referred to in the folk-lore of many nations.

37. River-god, Kebren by name. See Introduction.

38. build up, make by my song a memorial of my sorrow. 'To build the lofty rhyme' occurs in Milton's *Lycidas*, 11, and Spenser calls his *Epithalamium* 'an endlesse moniment.' The metaphor is a common one in both Latin and Greek.

39-41. as yonder walls .. shape, just as the walls of Troy rose slowly in obedience to the slow notes of Apollo's flute, like a cloud which, thin and unsubstantial at first, gradually assumes a solid and definite shape. Cf. *Tithonus*, 63:—

"When Ilion like a mist rose into towers,"

and the account of the building of Pandemonium, Milton, *Par. Lost*, i. 710-712:—

"Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose, like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet."

And Wordsworth, *In the Cathedral at Cologne*, 12-14 :—

“Strains that call forth upon empyreal ground
Immortal fabrics, rising to the sound
Of penetrating harps and voices sweet.”

And *Gareth and Lynette*, 254-257 :—

“And Fairy Queens have built the city, son ;
They came from out a sacred mountain cleft
Toward the sunrise, each with harp in hand,
And built it to the music of their harps.”

Classical myths (see Ovid, *Her.* xv. 179) aver that the stones of the walls of Troy were charmed into their places by the sweet sound of Apollo's flute, when Jupiter condemned the Gods Apollo and Neptune to serve Laomedon, King of Troas. A similar tale is told of the walls of Thebes, which rose to the music of Amphiön's lyre.

43. **My heart... woe**, I may be beguiled by my song into temporary forgetfulness of my bitter grief.

48. **dewy dark**, dark with drops of dew. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 606, “dewy-glooming downs.” Tennyson also has ‘dewy-fresh,’ ‘dewy-tassel'd,’ and ‘dewy-warm.’

49. **Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris**. The fairness of Paris's outward form is contrasted with the baseness of his mind. Cf. *Δύσπαρι, εἶδος ἀπύρτε*, ‘Evil Paris, most beautiful in form,’ Homer, *Iliad*, iii. 39; cf. the Gk. *καλόπαρις, κακόπαρις*, ‘beautiful-Paris, evil-Paris.’ Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 613, “the beauteous, hateful isle.”

50. **white-hooved**. *White-hoofed* would be the more usual form. Similarly Tennyson writes *hooves* (for *hoofs*), *Lady of Shalott*, 101, his ear occasionally preferring the fuller sound.

51. **Simois**. The rivers Simois and Scamander arise at two different points on Mount Ida and join in the plain of Troas, the united stream falling into the Hellespont. **reedy**. Homer, *Iliad*, iv. 383, has a similar epithet for a river, Ἀσωπὸν βαθύσχονον, ‘Asopus deep-grown with reeds.’

53. **call'd me**. In the stillness of the early dawn the sound of the torrent would be like a voice breaking the silence to address Cenone.

54. **solitary morning**, the high and remote morning light.

56. **white-breasted ... dawn**. The light of a star becomes white as the morning dawns. Cf. *The Princess*, iii. 1 :—

“Morn in the white wake of the morning star.”

And *Geraint and Enid*, 734 :—

“The white and glittering star of morn.”

57. **a leopard skin**. So in Homer's description of Paris, *Iliad*,

iii. 17, Παρδαλέην ὤμοισιν ἔχων, which Pope translates, "a panther's speckled hide flowed o'er his armour."

58. sunny hair. Cf. *Morte d'Arthur*, 216, 217 (and note):—

"Bright and lustrous curls
That made his forehead like a rising sun."

Also Milton's description of Adam, *Par. Lost*, iv. 301-303:—

"Hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering."

60. foam-bow, a compound word formed on the model of *rainbow*. When the spray of the cataract is blown upwards by the wind and in falling forms a curved cascade, the sun shining on the drops of foam paints them with the prismatic colours of the rainbow. Cf. *The Sea-fairies*, 28:—

"The rainbow hangs on the falling wave."

and *The Princess*, v. 309:—

"This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
Foam."

Cf. also Byron, *Childe Harold*, iv. 640-645, and *Manfred*, 2, 21.

62. Went forth... he came. As a host advances from the door to meet a welcome guest ere he reaches the house.

65. Hesperian gold, a golden apple such as grew in the fabulous gardens of the Hesperides, the Daughters of Night, who lived in islands at the extreme west of the then known world. One of the labours of Hercules was to steal these apples.

66. smelt ambrosially. Ambrosia (cf. Skt. *amrita*) was the food of the Greek Gods, as *nectar* was their drink; it was sometimes used as an unguent or perfume, as by Herè in Homer, *Iliad*, xiv. 170. See *Demeter*, 102.

67. river of speech. In both Greek and Latin writers we find the comparison of speech to the flow of water: cf. *αὐδὴ ῥέειν*, Homer; *ἔρεα ῥεῖ*, Hesiod; and *flumen orationis*, 'river of speech,' Cicero; also "Rivers of melodies," *The Palace of Art*, 171.

69. Beautiful-brow'd, in reference to her 'married brows' mentioned in line 74. my own soul, my dearest one: cf. the Latin *anima mea*.

71. would seem, shows that it was probably meant for thee as being, etc.

72. whatever Oread, a classical construction; equivalent to 'any Oread (or Mountain-Nymph) that haunts.'

73. grace of movement. Bacon in his *Essay Of Beauty* writes, "In beauty, that of favour is more than that of colour, and that of decent and gracious motion more than that of favour."

74. the charm of married brows, the attractive beauty of

eyebrows that grow across the forehead till they meet each other. Meeting eyebrows were considered a great beauty by the ancient Greeks: cf. Anacreon, xv. 16, *συνόφρων βλεφάρων ἴσιν κελαινῇν*, 'the dark arch of brows that meet,' and Theocritus, *Id.* viii. 72, *σύνοφρος κόρα*, 'a girl with meeting eyebrows.' Ovid, in his *Art of Love*, iii. 201, talks of the habit which Roman ladies had of joining the ends of the eyebrows by a pencilled line. Cf. Juvenal, *Sat.* ii. 93. But meeting eyebrows are described as a special mark of ugliness in the *Kathá Sarit Ságara* (chap. 20); and in modern Greece, as also in Icelandic and German folk-lore, they are regarded as a sign that a man is a vampire or a were-wolf.

76. the blossom of his lips, his lips that were fragrant and soft and rich in colour as the blossom of a flower. Cf. *The Princess*, *Prol.* 195, "the pouted blossom of her lips."

78. full-faced . ranged, when the whole company of the *ἑοῖς* were ranked. *Full-faced* = 'not a face being absent,' or perhaps also in allusion to the majestic brows of the Gods: cf. "large-brow'd Verulam" (*The Palace of Art*, 163), and "Full-faced above the valley stood the moon" (*The Lotos-Eaters*, 7), and "glowing full-faced welcome" (*The Princess*, ii. 166).

80. 'twere due, it ought to be given.

81. light-foot Iris. Spenser uses the form *light-foot*, *Fairy Queen*, i. 2. 8, "light-foot steede," and i. 8. 25, "light-foot squire"; Beaumont in *The Masque* has "light-foot Iris," and Tennyson has it again in his *Achilles over the Trench*, 1. Homer's permanent epithet for Iris is *πόδας ὠκέα*, 'swift of foot.' Iris was the messenger of the Gods.

82. Delivering, announcing. Cf. Shaks., *Coriolanus*, iv. 6. 62:—

"The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is delivered."

85. meed of fairest, prize for being most beautiful.

86. whispering tuft, clusters of pines in whose branches the wind whispers.

87. May'st well behold, canst easily see whilst unseen thyself.

91. lost his way. A single bright cloud had wandered apart from the other clouds between the pine-clad sides.

94. brake like fire, burst out of the ground like tongues of flame; alluding to the fiery yellow-red colour of the crocus. Cf. *In Memoriam*, lxxiii. 11, 12:—

"Deep tulips dashed with fiery dew,
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire."

The May Queen, 33:—

"The wild marsh-marigold shines like fire
in swamps and hollows gray,"

and *The Progress of Spring*, i. 1:—

“The ground flame of the crocus breaks the mould.”

Sophocles (*Ed. Col.* 685) has χρυσανγής κρόκος, ‘gold-gleaming crocus,’ and Wordsworth (*Ruth*) writes of flowers that set the hills on fire. This description recalls Homer, *Iliad*, xiv. 347-349:—

Τοῖσι δ' ὑπὸ χθῶν δία φύεν νεοθηλέα πολὴν
 Λωτὸν θ' ἐρσήεντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἥδ' ὑακινθον
 Πυκνὸν καὶ μαλακόν.

‘And underneath them the divine earth put forth fresh-sprouting grass, and dewy lotus and crocus and hyacinth thick and soft.’ Also cf. Milton, *P. L.* iv. 692-703.

95. amaracus, the modern *marjoram*, an aromatic fragrant plant. asphodel, a lily-shaped plant, the roots of which were eaten; often mentioned by Greek authors. Homer, *Odys.* ii. 539, describes the shades of heroes as haunting an asphodel meadow. Cf. *Demeter and Persephone*, 151, and note. Milton, *Par. Lost*, ix. 1040, has “Pansies, and violets, and asphodel.”

99. Ran riot, grew in straggling luxuriance.

102. crested peacock. The crested peacock (Lat. *pavo cristatus*), the male bird, was sacred to Herè and Juno.

103. golden cloud, gold-coloured cloud. The Gods are described by Homer, *Iliad*, xiii. 523, as sitting on golden clouds. See also *Iliad*, xiv. 343. Herè retires into this cloud when Paris has made his award.

104. slowly dropping fragrant dew. So in Homer, *Iliad*, xiv. 351, when Zeus and Herè are shrouded in the golden cloud, “bright dew drops kept falling from it,” στίλπναι δ' ἀπέπιπτον ξερσαι.

105. the voice of her, the voice of Herè, the gold-throned Queen of Heaven.

107. the Gods rise up. So in Homer, *Iliad*, xv. 85, the gods rise up at Herè's approach; as also in honour of Zeus, *Iliad*, i. 532.

111. to embellish state, to decorate the lordly position with grand surroundings.

112. river-sunder'd champaign, plain intersected by rivers. Cf. “Champaigns riched with plenteous rivers,” Shaks., *Lear*, i. 1. 68, and Milton, *Par. Reg.* iii. 257:—

“Fair champain with less rivers interveined.”

113. labour'd mine... ore, mines which no amount of labour can exhaust of their ore. Cf. *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, 146, where, however, ore = gold.

114. Honour... homage. Some verb must be supplied here, such as “I proffer.”

116, 117. **Mast-throng'd** ... towers, whose still harbour waters, surrounded by tall towers, are crowded with masts under the shadow of her citadel.

120. **Which** ... of all, which all men aim at in every active endeavour.

121. **fitted to the season**, adapted to deal suitably with each special crisis. **wisdom-bred and throned of wisdom**. Power that springs from and is trained by wisdom (and not from mere brute force), and that is raised to its lofty position by the wisdom with which it is exercised. Lowell, *Prometheus*, says, "True power was never born of brutish strength."

124. **Fall from the sceptre-staff**, weakened by age, becomes unable any longer to wield the sceptre.

126. **A shepherd ... yet king-born**. See Introduction.

127. **Should come** ... gods, ought to be a most welcome offer (both from the appropriateness of the gift as coming from a queen and being given to a king's son, and) because it is only in the possession of power that men can be like the Gods.

129. **quiet seats**. Cf. Lucretius, *De Rerum Nat.* iii. 18, *sedesque quietae Quas neque concutiant venti*, 'and quiet seats, which neither do the winds shake, etc.'

130. **Above the thunder**. See the description at the conclusion of *The Lotos-Eaters*; also Lucretius, 104-108:—

"The Gods, who haunt
The lucid interspace of world and world
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans."

134. **out at arm's-length**, as if to give it to Herè.

135. **Flatter'd his spirit**, gratified his ambitious thoughts, or, took his fancy.

136. **clear, bright and spotless**.

137. **O'erthwarted**, crossed,—frequently used by Chancer, also by Dryden, Milton, and Clarendon. **brazen-headed**. The Greek word χαλκός, generally translated *brass*, denoted a kind of *bronze* metal.

138. **pearly**, an epithet suggestive of whiteness and coldness. Observe the absence of colour and warmth in this picture of the goddess of chastity; contrast the warm colouring in the succeeding description of Aphrodite, the goddess of love.

140. **angry cheek**, angry because of the effect which Herè's tempting offer of mere power seems to have on Paris.

142-8. **Self-reverence** ... consequence. This is among the best known and oftenest quoted passages in Tennyson's poems. Pallas

here answers the persuasive arguments of Herè by asserting that power in its truest and noblest sense does not mean regal sway over others, but mastery and government of self.

144-8. Yet not .. consequence, yet though I talk of power, the object of life should not be mere power, for power comes of her own accord to the true liver without his seeking it; but real wisdom consists in living in obedience to law and to fixed principles of duty, in carrying these principles fearlessly into action, and in doing what is right for its own sake, regardless of the immediate results. Cf. *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, 201-205:—

“Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self——”

151. Sequel...fairer. No gift that I could offer, to be won by your award, could enhance my beauty. Look at me with eyes unseduced by bribes such as Herè's offer of power, and you will see that I am essentially the fairest.

153-64. Yet indeed .. perfect freedom. But if, as it may be, your eyes, dazzled by the bright beauty of unveiled goddesses, are unable to distinguish true fairness without being influenced by a bribe, this much will I promise you, that, my claim being acknowledged, I will be your close and constant friend; so that, invigorated by my influence, you shall be filled with energy and enthusiasm sufficient to urge you through the storms and perils of a life of great deeds, until your powers of endurance become strengthened by frequent exercise, and your will, grown to maturity, after experiencing every variety of trial, and having become identical with the absolute rule (of duty), find perfect freedom in willing obedience to that rule.

The sentiment of this fine passage is illustrated in Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*. See also the second collect, Morning Prayer, in the Church of England *Book of Common Prayer*, “O God ... whose service is perfect freedom.”

156. rest thee sure. *Thee* is here grammatically in the dative case; such reflexive datives with intransitive verbs were very common in Old English. For other examples see Maetzner, *Eng. Gram.* vol. ii, pt. ii, 5. Cf. *The Lotus-Eaters*, 37: “They sat *them* down.”

161. until endurance ... action. The original reading was:—

“so endurance,
Like to an athlete's arm, shall still become
Sinew'd with motion——”

Cf. Shaks. 2 *Henry IV.*, iv. 1. 172, “insinew'd to this action.”

167. Or hearing would not hear, or though he heard my words would not take heed of them. Cf. *Æschylus*, *Prom. Vinct.* 447, κλύοντες οὐκ ἤκουον, 'hearing did not hear.'

170. *Idalian Aphrodite beautiful.* *Idalian*=from *Idalium*, a town in *Cyprus*, sacred to *Aphrodite*. She is also called *Cypria* from *Cyprus*.

171. *Fresh as the foam.* '*Aphrodite*' means '*foam-born*' (Gk. ἀφρός, foam). She is said to have risen out of the waves of the sea. See the description of *Aphrodite* in *The Princess*, vii. 148-154:—

"When she came
From barren deeps to conquer all with love."

Paphian wells. *Paphos*, a town in *Cyprus*, where *Aphrodite* is said to have first landed after her birth from the waves. Hence she is sometimes styled *Paphia*.

172-8. Observe the warmth and colour of this description in the epithets—*rosy fingers, warm brows, golden hair, lucid throat, rosy-white feet, glowing sunlights. rosy...hair.* Cf. *Mariana in the South*, 13-16:—

"She, as her carol sadder grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her streaming curls of deepest brown."

174. *Ambrosial.* An epithet often used by *Homer* of the hair of the gods; it means 'of heavenly beauty'; cf. *Verg. Æneid*, i. 403, *Ambrosiaque comae divinum vertice odorem spiravere*, 'and the ambrosial locks on her head breathed a heavenly fragrance.' *golden, gleaming like gold.* *Homer* frequently styles *Aphrodite* "the golden."

178. *Floated...sunlights, bright spots of sunshine coming between the vine-branches lightly passed over her figure.* Cf. *The Princess*, vi. 65. 6:—

"And over them the tremulous isles of light
Slided, they moving under shade."

180. *subtle...triumph.* The sly, meaning smile showed how confident she was of victory; she knew well the kind of gift that would most tempt *Paris*.

184. *laugh'd.* *Aphrodite* is often styled φιλομμειδής, 'laughter-loving,' by *Homer*. shut my sight. Cf. *Maud*, Part I. xviii. viii. :—

"And now by this my love has closed her sight."

185. *raised his arm, in order to give the apple to Aphrodite.*

189. *I am alone, i.e. 'I have been and still am alone.'*

192. am I not fair? Cf. Theocritus, *Id.* xx. 19 :—
 ποιμένες εἰπατέ μοι τὸ κρήγυνον· οὐ καλὸς ἐμὲ ;
 "O shepherds, tell the truth! Am I not fair?"
193. My love, he whom I love, Paris: cf. Lat. *noster amor*.
195. wanton ... star, a wild leopard, full of frolic and with bright soft eyes like the light of the evening star.
197. Crouch'd fawning. Belief in the influence of beauty, or, more often, of chastity, in taming wild beasts, is often expressed by poets, ancient and modern. Thus in the Homeric hymn to Aphrodite, the goddess is fawned upon by "wolves grisly grey ... and leopards swift"; cf. also Una and her lion in Spenser's *Faery Queen*.
202. whirling Simois, the river was full of eddies produced by the curving banks. *Whirling* is a Homeric epithet of a river, as in *Iliad*, v. 479, Ἐάνθω ἐπὶ δινῆεντι, 'on whirling Xanthus.'
204. my tallest pines. CEnone calls the pines her own because she knew and loved them so well; Oreads, like Dryads, tended trees. The pines were cut down to make ships for Paris's expedition to Sparta. Ida supplied wood to Troy for many purposes, funeral pyres, etc.; see Homer, *Iliad*, xxiii. 117.
205. plumed, formed a crest upon, as feathers upon a helmet; cf. *Geraint and Enid*, 316 :—
 "A shattered archway plumed with fern."
206. blue gorge, the narrow ravine full of purple shadow. Cf. *A Dream of Fair Women*, 186, "the deep-blue gloom."
208. Foster'd, held the nests of the unfledged eaglet. For *callow*, cf. Lat. *calvus*, Skt. *khalati*.
210. The panther's roar. Ida is called by Homer (e.g. *Iliad*, xiv. 283), μητέρα θηρῶν, 'mother of wild beasts.'
215. trembling stars. The twinkling of the stars is compared with the vibration produced in a body by any loud sound. Cf. *On a Mourner*, vi. 3, "Thro' silence, and the trembling stars," and *Morte d'Arthur*, 199, 'tingling stars.'
220. The Abominable, Eris, the goddess of strife. See Introduction.
223. bred, originated.
229. E'en on this hand, sworn by this hand of mine; or sworn, taking my hand in his own.
230. Seal'd it etc. Has he not ratified the oath by kisses and tears?
237. pass before, throw thy shadow upon.
242. fiery thoughts, thoughts of revenge.
244. catch the issue, apprehend the result.

250. **never child be born.** She shudders at the notion of having a child by Paris. Some accounts say that her ~~husband~~ was born and named Corythus.

251. **to vex me,** to remind me, by his resemblance to his father, of his father's treachery.

254. **their shrill happy laughter,** the loud joyous laughter of Paris and Helen.

256. **ancient love,** former lover, Paris.

259. **Cassandra,** daughter of Priam. She was gifted by Apollo with the power of prophesying the truth, with the drawback that her predictions should never be believed. When she predicted to the Trojans the siege and destruction of their city, they shut her up in prison as a mad woman. On the fall of Troy she became the slave of Agamemnon, and was murdered along with her master by his wife Clytemnestra.

260. **A fire dances,** in allusion to the future fate of Troy. Cf. Cassandra's speech in Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1256 : *παπαί, ολον τὸ πῦρ ἐπέρχεται δέ μοι*, 'Ah me, the fire, how it comes upon me now.'

264. **All earth ... fire.** Cf. Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*, iv. 2 :—

"The heaven o'er my head seems made of molten brass,
The earth of flaming sulphur."

THE PALACE OF ART.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS poem was first published in the winter of 1832. It has undergone very considerable alterations: of the eighty-three stanzas of which it originally consisted, some thirty-one have been omitted, and in those that remain much has been changed, while twenty-two entirely new stanzas have been added.

The poet has prefixed to the poem the following explanation of its purpose :—

"I send you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,
A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,
A glorious hill, large in heart and brain,
That still is only Beauty seen
In all varieties of mould and mind)
And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if Good,
Good only for its beauty, seeing not

The Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
 That sit upon each other, friends to man,
 Living together under the same roof,
 And never can be sundered without tears.
 And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be
 Shut out from Love, and on her threshold lie
 Howling in outer darkness. Not for this
 Was common clay ta'en from the common earth
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with the tears
 Of angels to the perfect shape of man."

We have here, then, an allegorical picture of a being possessed of the highest mental powers and of every means to gratify intellectual craving, who deliberately resolves to spend life in the contemplation of objects of beauty and in the cultivation of æsthetic refinement. For this purpose he deems it necessary to build for his Soul an isolated abode where it may dwell apart from mankind in unapproachable seclusion; to surround it with artificial reproductions of whatever beauty Nature presents in flowing stream, or branching wood, in rainbow colours, or sweet odours; and rigorously to exclude from view every unpleasing sight and sound. The dwelling is adorned with representations of ideal landscapes, with pictured legends, and with the portraits of bards and philosophers. The struggles of the human race in its endeavour to assert the rights of manhood are recognised only so far as they serve to supply graceful pictorial devices, which are made to ornament the pavement under the feet as though unworthy of serious attention.

While the æsthetic and intellectual faculties are thus cultivated to perfect development, the other side of a man's nature, the emotions and affections of the heart, is neglected and starved. Absorbed in the triumphant consciousness of her own supremacy and the enjoyment of her own power, the Soul ignores her relation to God and her duties to the human race. The natural sympathies which bind man to man are allowed to rust with disuse, until they give place to a scornful disdain of ordinary human life, which is pictured as wallowing in gross animal enjoyments: these have no charm for the cultured Soul, and she prides herself on an isolation as complete as that of those gods who dwelt "careless of mankind" in the unapproachable heaven of heathen mythology.

But such immunity from the common yoke of mortality is not given to mortal: for man is "then most Godlike, being most a man." He who "shuts Love out" shall sooner or later awake to the consciousness that he has cut himself off from human sympathy, and, like Richard III. in Shakspeare, who "had neither pity, love, nor fear," shall cry in despair,

"There is no creature loves me,
 And if I die, no soul shall pity me."

Loathing and disgust shall take the place of delight, and that isolation which seemed "godlike," graven with all signs of beauty and power, shall change into a stagnant solitude, peopled only with ghastly spectres and images of corruption.

But though awakened to scorn of herself and horror of her slothful pride, the mind cannot easily renounce its belief in refinement as the highest virtue, and the natural emotions, so long disused, will not readily spring into active life. By slow degrees, however, the conscience is fully aroused, and the feeling that, while the whole universe around her is advancing from lower to higher conditions, she alone remains stationary, possesses the Soul; she sees that it is only by descending from her "intellectual throne," by abandoning the sole worship of beauty for its own sake, that she can hope to share in the life of mankind and in the high hopes that humanity is heir to. She leaves her proud palace, and steps in humility down to join the common life of her fellows.

It was not, however, in culture and the love of beauty that the evil lay; they were not low and despicable faculties and tastes that the Soul had cultivated: there was nothing sensual or degrading in the joys of the palace. When the neglected side of her nature has been duly encouraged to grow, when the claims of duty to one's neighbour are recognised and the voices of the conscience and the heart are listened to, then the palace may be again inhabited by the Soul; she may return there not to shut herself up in proud isolation, but bringing others, her fellow-men, with her. If the fruits of intellectual culture are shared "with others" and loving service is thus rendered to her fellow-creatures—if, in Bacon's words, knowledge be no longer regarded as "a tower for a proud mind to raise itself upon," but as "a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate," then the Soul will no longer look on the Palace of Art as a loathsome prison-house but as a happy home.

The lesson of this poem has been taught by many teachers before Tennyson. St. Paul taught it when he wrote, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity (i.e. love) buildeth up," and again, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge ... and have not charity, I am nothing." Bacon recognised the truth of this teaching when he thus explained St. Paul's words:—"Not but that it is an excellent thing to speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but because, if it be severed from charity, and not referred to the good of men and mankind, it hath rather a sounding and unworthy glory than a meriting and substantial virtue."

In Mrs. E. B. Browning's *The Poet's Vow*, a poet "forswears

man's sympathy. To live in solitary communion with Nature :—

"God send day work he would accept,
But let the rest go by."

But he breaks his vow at sight of the corpse of his deserted bride, and dies upon her bier.

NOTE

3. **carouse**, feast; derived from Ger. *garaus*, right out, used of emptying a bumper to anyone's health.

5. **huge crag-platform**, level summit of a huge rock.

6. **ranged ramparts**, lines of perpendicular rock, like the walls of a fort.

8. **Suddenly scaled the light**, shot sheer up into the open sky from the grassy plain below.

9. **Of ledge etc.**, with its sides unbroken by ledge or shelf, and so affording no foothold for a climber.

11. **would live**. The past tense 'would' points to the thought as it existed in the mind of the speaker: 'at the time of building I thought that it would.'

14. **a quiet king**, in calm supremacy.

15. **Still as, while Saturn whirls etc.** The shadow of Saturn thrown upon the bright ring that surrounds the planet appears motionless, though the body of the planet revolves. Saturn rotates on its axis in the short period of $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours; but the shadow of this swiftly whirling mass shows no more motion than is seen in the shadow of a top spinning so rapidly that it seems to be standing still or 'sleeping.' This passage is often quoted as an example of Tennyson's accurate realisation of scientific facts. See General Introduction, p. xv.

18. **Trust me, rest assured**.

20. **royal-rich**. An instance of Tennyson's use of alliteration in his double words; see General Introduction, p. xx.: in this poem we have also 'fountain-foam,' 'fountain-flood,' 'full-fed,' 'shallow-streaks,' 'maid-mother,' 'world-worn.'

21. **Four courts etc.** The palace was built in a perfectly symmetrical shape, indicating the equal culture of each separate department of Art. With the whole of this description may be compared Bacon's plan of a "perfect palace" in his *Essay Of Building*. Bacon's palace is to have "fair courts" and "stately galleries," with "flue coloured windows"; it is to be "cloistered on all sides," and to have "an open gallery upon pillars, to take the prospect and freshness of the garden," with "some fountains running in divers places from the wall."

23. The golden gorge etc., i.e. fountain like golden images of dragons spouted water from their

26. cloisters, arched passages—from *L. claustra*, from *clausum*, shut in: literally 'enclosures,' hence 'places of religious seclusion,' hence 'arched passages' such as are often found in monasteries or cathedrals. branch'd like mighty woods. The lines of the arches overhead, springing from the pillars, resembled the branches of huge trees, springing from their trunks and uniting so as to form a roof. See Ruskin on Naturalism in Gothic architecture, *The Stones of Venice*, ii. 6, 70, "Gradually ... the stony pillar grew slender and the vaulted roof grew light, till they had wreathed themselves into the semblance of the summer woods at their fairest."

30. lent broad verge etc., presented a wide prospect reaching to far-off lands. *Verge* is several times used by Tennyson in the sense of 'horizon'; cf. *The Princess*, vii. 23, "the slope of sea from verge to shore"; also *ib.* iv. 29, a sail that sinks "below the verge," and *The Gardener's Daughter*, 79, "May from verge to verge." *Verge*, in this sense, is derived from *L. uirga*, 'a rod or wand of office,' hence 'the limits within which an office is exercised,' hence 'a limit, boundary, horizon.' It seems here to mean 'circle bounded by the horizon,' 'range of view.'

32. Dipt down to sea and sands, seemed to slope downwards till it joined the low line of sea and sand at the horizon.

33. swell, full stream.

35. In misty folds etc., throwing off wreaths of vaporous spray which wavered slowly down and glittered with the prismatic colours of the rainbow. Cf. the description of falling streams in *The Lotos-Eaters*, 10, 11:—

"some like a downward smoke
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go,"

and *The Princess*, vi. 198: "wreaths of dangling water-smoke."

36. torrent-bow. Cf. *The Vision of Sin*, ii. 19, "Flung the torrent rainbow round." In *Enone*, 60, we find "foam-bow."

37. peak, pinnacle, slender turret. The roof of the Cathedral of Milan is thus ornamented with statues on every pinnacle: cf. the description of it in *The Daisy*, 64, 65:—

"I stood among the silent statues
And statued pinnacles—"

38. To hang on tiptoe, to poise itself on tiptoe, as does the famous statue of Mercury by Giovanni da Bologna, at Florence.

39. steam'd, 'made to steam,' and so equivalent to 'steaming, rising like steam.' This use of the participle in *-ed*, where modern English employs the participle in *-ing*, is very common

in Elizabethan English. See Abbott, *Shaks. Gram.*, § 374, and Schmidt, *Shakspeare's Grammar*, p. 1417.

41. *And who etc.* The word 'and' implies that the thought expressed in the text is an addition to a series of thoughts in the mind; the Soul has been silently surveying the palace, and at last concludes with these words.

42. *unblinded*, without being dazzled by the tremulous bow and the ever-rising clouds of incense.

46. *while day sank etc.*, in the glow of the setting or the rising sun.

49. *deep-set*, sunk deep into the thickness of the wall. *stain'd*, filled with stained or coloured glass; cf. "Oriels' colour'd flame," l. 161, below, and Milton, *Il Penseroso*, 159, "storied windows, richly dight." *traced*, i.e. with its mullions (the slender pillars which hold the glass) branching out into arches and curves of ornamental stonework.

50. *slow-flaming*, burning with a still and steady light. The light shining upon the coloured glass resembled the crimson glow of a steady flame.

51. *From shadow'd grots etc.*, coming from dim recesses, where the arches forming the framework of the windows intersected each other (as is often seen in Gothic windows).

52. *tipt with frost-like spires*. The window arches were over-canopied by carved mouldings that tapered up to fine points, like the ice-pinnacles seen on snow-clad mountains. Cf. *In Memoriam*, cxxvii. 16:

"The spires of ice are toppled down,"

and *The Princess*, vii. 182, "a star upon the sparkling spire."

54. *That over-vaulted grateful gloom*, whose arched roofs created a pleasant twilight below: 'over-vaulted' is a transitive verb. Cf. *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, 126, "the hollow-vaulted dark."

58. *each a perfect etc.*, each containing a complete representation of some piece of natural scenery.

59. *fit for*, suited to, in harmony with.

60. *still*, sitting in passive contemplation: cf. ll. 13-16, above.

61. *arras*, tapestry covering the walls; from Arras, a town in the north of France, where it was first made; cf. *calico* (from Calicut), *muslin* (from Mosul), and *sardonyx*, l. 95. *green and blue*, colours of earth and sky at their brightest.

62. *gandy*, depicted in brilliant colouring. With the glad activity, buoyant life, and bright colouring of this picture, contrast the dark desolation and gloomy mystery of the succeeding one.

88. A haunt ~~of~~ ancient Peace, where Peace has dwelt undisturbed for ages. 90. fit for etc. See l. 59, above.

92. Not less than truth design'd, pictured with exact fidelity to nature; cf. l. 128, below. Cf. Shelley, *The Recollection*, ll. 77, 78, "every leaf and lineament With more than truth exprest."

93. The moods suggested by local scenery are followed by those arising from contemplation of historic or legendary actions and incidents, such as frequently form the subjects of pictures. maid-mother, the Virgin Mary.

94. In tracts etc., in the midst of a sunny pastoral landscape, such as was often painted as a background in pictures of the Holy Family by the old Italian masters.

95. Beneath branch-work etc., under an arched shrine or canopy of sardonyx stone. Several pictures of the "Madonna and Child" by Raphael represent them as enthroned under a carved canopy. The sardonyx gets its name from *Sardis*, in Asia Minor, where it is said to have been first found (cf. l. 61), and Gk. *συνυξ*, a nail, its colour resembling that of the finger-nail.

96. babe in arm. A phrase like "sword in hand." Cf. *The Princess*, vi. 15:—

"But high upon the palace Ida stood
With Psyche's babe in arm."

97. clear-wall'd, with walls rising in distinct outline: in contrast to the wide sweep of landscape forming the background of the last picture. See Rossetti's illustration of this scene in the 1864 edition of Tennyson's poems.

98. organ-pipes. St. Cecilia, or Cecily, was said to have invented the organ: her musical skill was so exquisite, the legends tell us, that an angel fell in love with her and nightly brought her white roses from Paradise: she suffered martyrdom in A.D. 220. See Dryden, *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*, 52-54:—

"When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appear'd,
Mistaking earth for heaven."

There are famous pictures of St. Cecilia by Raphael and by Van Eyck.

99. Wound, entwined.

102. Houris, the virgins of Paradise who, according to the teaching of the Koran, are to tend the faithful Mussulman in Paradise. bow'd, bent towards earth.

103. Islamite, from Arabic *islam*, obedience to God's will. with hands etc., with their hands outstretched to receive him and looks of welcome in their eyes.

105. mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son. Arthur, founder of

the Round Table, was said to be the son of Uther Pendragon, a legendary king or chief of the Britons. In his *Roll of The Passing of Arthur* Tennyson describes how Arthur after having been "smitten through the helm" by the traitor Modred in his last great battle, is carried away by three queens, who lament over him, to "the island-valley of Avilion," to be healed of his wound. Avalon, Avelion, or Avilion is supposed to have been the name of a valley in an island of the river near Glastonbury in Somersetshire. But many of the early romances make it an ocean-island, and in medieval legends it becomes a sort of earthly Paradise whither the favourites of the Gods were conveyed without dying, corresponding to the "Islands of the Blest," the "Fortunate Islands" of the Greek and Roman mythology. 'Avalon' is said to mean literally 'Isle of Apples,' from Breton *aval*, an apple.

106. **sloping greens**, undulating meadowland. The indefiniteness of 'fair space' is like that of 'a great water' in *Morte d'Arthur*, 12.

110. **To list**, to listen for the sound of.

111. **The wood-nymph**. Egeria, a wood-nymph of the forest of Aricia, was supposed to have instructed Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome, in all the arts of government. Cf. *The Princess*, ii. 65: "She that taught the Sabine how to rule." Numa was a Sabine of the city of Cures. **the Ausonian king**. 'Ausonia' was an ancient name of Campania, from Auson, son of Ulysses, and the name was afterwards used (especially by Vergil, who was an antiquarian) of the whole of Italy during its mythical period. The original reading in this passage was "the Tuscan king." to hear etc., to listen to lessons in statecraft.

113. **engrail'd**, indented, serrated; an heraldic term.

115. **Indian Cama**, Camadev, or Camadeo, the Cupid or God of Love of Hindu Mythology. He is represented as riding across the sky on the back of a lory or parrot accompanied by the cuckoo, the humming-bee, and other signs of springtide: cf. Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*, x. 19:—

"'Twas Camadeo riding on his lory."

sail'd a summer etc., floated across the summer sky wafted by spicy breezes.

117. **Europa**, the beautiful maiden who, according to classic story, while gathering flowers was carried off across the sea by Jupiter, under the form of a bull of gentle demeanour. **blew**. The reading of some earlier editions, was, by a misprint, 'blue.' This description is parallel to the description of Moschus, *Idyl.* ii. 125 etc. :—

"But she upon the ox-like back of Zeus
Sitting, with one hand held the bull's great horn,

And with the other her garment's purple fold
 Drew up^{ward} that the infinite hoary spray
 Of the salt ocean might not drench it through ;
 The while Europa's mantle by the winds
 Was filled and swollen like a vessel's sail
 Buoying the maiden onward." (Steadman.)

121. *flush'd Ganymede*. Greek myths relate that Ganymede, a beautiful boy, was carried off by the eagle of Zeus that he might become cup-bearer and favourite of the king of the Gods. *flush'd*, blushing. There is a picture by Titian of the Rape of Ganymede in the National Gallery, London.

124. *the pillar'd town*. Probably Troy is intended where the pillars of the temples would be conspicuous features. Ganymede, according to some accounts, was carried off from Mt. Ida: see Horace, *Odes*, iii. 20, 15; *aquosa Raptus ab Ida*, 'snatched up from watery Ida.'

126. *supreme Caucasian mind*. *Caucasian* was an epithet formerly used in ethnology to designate the races now known as Indo-European, supposed to be the highest type of humanity. The cradle of this race was believed to be in or near Mt. Caucasus.

127. *Carved out of Nature for itself*, invented as an allegorical expression of some great truth existing in Nature. Myths generally originated from natural phenomena.

128. *Not less than life, design'd*, pictured so as exactly to represent the living object. Cf. l. 95, above.

130. *Moved of themselves*, being set in motion by their own power, automatically.

131. *Choice paintings of wise men*. With Tennyson's pictures may be compared the gallery of portraits painted by Mrs. E. B. Browning in *A Vision of Poets*.

133. *Milton like a seraph strong*. The original reading was "The deep-haired Milton like an angel tall." The change is a happy example of the improvements Tennyson has introduced in the final version of his poem: the former reading gave little idea of the qualities of Milton's genius; the latter suggests "a power of sustained flight, of far-reaching vision, of lofty eloquence." The seraphim, according to the ancient Hebrew doctrine, were an order of angels who hovered round the throne of God on mighty wings, chanting His praises and bearing His messages to earth; their chief attributes were power and wisdom. The cherubim were silent, mysterious spirits, and are generally pictured as not of human shape—winged heads without bodies. Cf. Gray's well-known lines on Milton (*Progress of Poesy*, iii. 2. 1):—

"Nor second He, that rode sublime
 Upon the seraph-wings of Extasy."

134. **Shakespeare bland and mild.** These two epithets well denote the kindly and tolerant character of Shakspeare's genius, his broad sympathy with human nature, his freedom from cynical bitterness. Cf. "Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye."—*Sonnet to Macready*, 13.

135. **world-worn Dante.** The sad life led by the great Florentine poet in his long exile left its impress on his features: portraits of him represent his face as marked with deep lines of care and thought. grasp'd his song. In the portrait of Dante by Giotto, at Florence, the poet holds a book under his arm.

137. **the Ionian father.** So Dryden calls Shakspeare "the Homer or father of our dramatic poets." Homer was probably an Asiatic Greek. He is thought to have been born in some Ionian city, probably either Smyrna or Chios. In busts and other likenesses of Homer he is generally represented as a very old man with a long beard and a wrinkled face. Pope (*The Temple of Fame*, 184, 185) thus pictures him:—

"Father of verse! in holy fillets drest,
His silver beard wav'd gently o'er his breast."

141. **stately-set, majestically poised.**

142. **Many an arch high up did lift, was raised on high by lofty arches.**

143. **And angels etc.** 'Jacob's ladder' was pictured on the ceiling. Cf. Bible, *Gen.* xxviii. 12, "And he (Jacob) dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

144. **With interchange of gift, i.e. carrying offerings of prayer and praise from man to God and bringing blessings down from heaven to earth.**

145. **mosaic.** Mosaic work is composed of small pieces of coloured marble, glass etc., set so as to form a regular pattern or picture, and cemented together; from Gk. *μουσαῖος*, 'belonging to the Muses,' hence 'artistic, ornamental.'

146. **cycles of the human tale, representations of those sets or series of historical events that occur in the case of every nation as it develops.**

148. **So wrought, they will not fail.** Understand *that*; "so wrought that they will not fail." Mosaic work is of a very permanent character. fail, decay, wear away.

149-160. The successive stages in the history of the French people from the middle of the eighteenth century might be well represented by this series of pictures. The grinding tyranny of taxation and the feudal exactions of the nobles under which the people patiently suffered during the *ancien régime*, were followed

by the tigerlike ferocity of the Reign of Terror which began after the overthrow of the monarchy and the execution of Louis XVI. Next came the vigorous energy of the young Republic with its grand schemes for 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'; and last, the failure and abandonment of these schemes and the ready adoption of various political constitutions—empire, monarchy, republic—as cures for social and political anarchy.

151. a tiger. Cf. *Locksley Hall*, 135 :—

"Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher."

153. strong to break etc., strong enough to crush or to fetter in firm bonds the violence of despots.

155. like some sick man. So the Turkish Empire was called "the Sick Man of Europe" by the Czar Nicholas in 1853.

157. over these she trod. The struggles of mankind in its progress towards freedom were disregarded as beneath notice, except as material for ornamental art.

159. Oriels, literally, windows in recesses: from Low Lat. *oriolum*, for *aureolum*, 'ornamented with gold,' recesses in large rooms often being profusely gilded. colour'd flame etc. The two faces were painted on the coloured glass forming the uppermost 'lights' of the two windows.

163. Plato., Verulam. Cf. *The Princess*, ii. 144-147 :—

"The highest is the measure of the man,
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay.
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the glebe,
But Homer, Plato, Verulam."

Francis Bacon was created Baron Verulam in 1618 and Viscount St. Albans in 1620. large-brow'd. The epithet is said to have been suggested by the bust of Bacon by Nollekens in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

164. The first of those who know, the two greatest of philosophers. The line is an adaptation of Dante's description of Aristotle, "Il maestro di color che sanno," the master of those who know. Cf. Church's *Life of Bacon*, Chap. viii. :—"Two men stand out 'the masters of those who know,' without equals up to their time among men—the Greek Aristotle and the Englishman Bacon. They agree in the universality and comprehensiveness of their conception of human knowledge: they were absolutely alone in their ambition to work out this conception."

165. And all etc., all those great thinkers who by their speculations and discoveries opened up new sources of knowledge and changed the course of human progress.

167. slender shafts, the thin stone columns forming the framework of the Gothic windows. blazon'd. portrayed: originally an heraldic term, meaning 'to paint with armorial bearings,'

from *F. blason*, a shield or coat of arms. Cf. *The Daisy*, 58, "The giant windows' blazon'd fires"; and *In Memoriam*, lxxxvii. 8, "The prophets blazon'd on the panes."

169. *Thro' which... Flush'd*. Cf. Keats, *St. Agnes' Eve*, 217-221:—

"Full on this casement shone the winter moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose bloom fell on her hands, together prest
And on her hair a glory like a saint."

171. *as morn from Memnon*. The colossal statue near Thebes in Egypt when first struck by the rays of the rising sun was said to emit a sound like the twanging of a chord. The statue was really one of Amenophis, an Egyptian king, but the Greeks called it Memnon, a legendary hero of the Trojan war, son of Eos, goddess of the Dawn. Allusions to the music of Memnon are frequent in the poets: cf. Akenside, *Pleasures of the Imagination*:—

... "Old Memnon's image, long renowned
By fabling Nilus; to the quivering touch
Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string
Consenting, sounded thro' the warbling air
Unbidden strains."

172. *Rivers of melodies*. Cf. *Ænone*, 64, "full-flowing river of speech," and note.

174. *her low preamble*, the soft prelude to her song. It is really the male bird that sings, but the poet here and in *The Princess*, i. 218 (with Milton, *Par. Lost*, iv. 603, etc.) follows the old myth which tells that one of the daughters of Pandion (either Procne or Philomela) was changed into a nightingale. But cf. *The Gardener's Daughter*, 93, 94:—

"The nightingale

Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of day."

176. *Throb thro' the ribbed stone*, pulsate or echo along the vaulted roof, whose arches and mouldings were curved like ribs.

177. *feastful, festive*—a Miltonic word: see his *Sonn.* iv. 12, "feastful friends," and *Sam. Agon.* 1741, "feastful days"; it is also found in Spenser.

179. *Lord over Nature* etc. The Soul is represented as having full mastery over all Science and all the secrets of the Universe and complete possession of the avenues by which knowledge reaches the perception.

183. *'Tis one to me, it is all the same to me, I am indifferent to it. young night divine*. The epithet 'divine' is frequently applied to night by Homer (*τὴν νύξ, ἀμβροσίην νύξ, κνέφας ἱερὴν*), in consideration, perhaps, of its reviving influence. *young, fresh*.

184. Crown'd etc. Cf. *Maud*, xliv. iv, "Yon fair stars that crown a happy day."

185. Making sweet close etc., bringing to a pleasant conclusion the delightful occupations of the day.

186. Lit Light etc. Cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, i. 726:—

"from the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets fed
With naphtha and asphaltus yielded light
As from a sky."

in wreaths and anadems, in lamps arranged in clusters and festoons: *anadem* is from Gk. ἀνάδημα, a head-band, from ἀναδέω, to bind around.

187. quintessences, purest extracts. The 'fifth essence,' *quinta essentia*, was added by Aristotle to the four material elements, earth, air, fire, water; Milton, *Par. Lost*, iii. 716, calls it "this ethereal quintessence of heaven": cf. *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, 122, 123:—

"The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame."

188. hollow'd moons of gems, transparent gems, hollowed out so as to contain the oil, and shaped like the moon.

189. To mimic heaven. The palace is completed by an artificial imitation of the star-lit sky, so that it may be within itself a treasure-house of all forms of beauty to be found in the Universe.

190. 'I marvel etc. I wonder whether my passive enjoyment of beauty is capable of further addition or extension.

192. flatter'd to the height, encouraged to expand itself to the utmost degree.

193. my various eyes, my different moods of contemplation.

196. My Gods etc. The only gods recognised are of the human species, and the Soul regards itself as their compeer: the worship of such gods is but reflected self-worship.

197. God-like isolation. Cf. Aristotle's saying (quoted by Bacon, *Essays, Of Friendship*), "Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a God." The Epicurean notion of the Gods as living aloof from mankind in heedless isolation is given in *The Lotos-Eaters*, 155-164.

199. What time I watch etc. From the proud height on which she has placed herself the Soul looks down with scorn and loathing on the world around. darkening, which seem like a stain or blur on the landscape.

201. In filthy sloughs etc. The ordinary life and natural joys

of mankind are regarded as mere animal grossness, not superior to that of swine wallowing in the mire. *Slough* is from a root *slug*, seen in the Ger. *schlucken*, to swallow, and means 'a hollow place full of mire,' such as would swallow up anything thrown into it. The other *slough*, meaning 'the cast-off skin of a snake,' may be traced to the same root. *prurient*, literally 'itching.'

203. And oft etc., and often in frenzied folly they seek their own ruin. Cf. Bible, *Mark*, v. 13, "And the unclean spirit went out and entered into the swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about two thousand) and were choked in the sea."

205. Then of etc. The Soul fondly talks of the higher instincts and of the desire for a life beyond the grave (which are the common property of all mankind) as if they were a peculiar possession of her own, which had come to her by the same natural process of evolution that had raised her to the supreme height of refinement above the common herd. *prate*, talk with foolish self-conceit.

209. I take possession etc., I claim as my own the results of all human progress.

210. I care not etc. The climax of the Soul's self-glorification is reached when she declares herself emancipated from the need of any form of religious belief, and recognising only her innate ideas of right, looks down from a serene height of contemplation upon the different creeds of mankind, regarding them as only jarring dogmatisms. Cf. *In Memoriam*, xxxiii. 1-4:—

"O thou, that after toil and storm
Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form."

213. the riddle of the painful earth, the unexplained problem of life on this sorrowful earth. Tennyson again uses the phrase "the riddle of the earth" in *The Two Voices*, 170: cf. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, ii. 4:—"The universe was as a mighty sphinx-riddle." The "still sad music of humanity" suddenly rises to the ears of the Soul, and fitfully reminds her of her toiling and suffering fellow-men.

219. Like Herod etc. Cf. Bible, *Acts*, xii. 21-23:—"And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

220. pangs of hell, stinging remorse and despair.

223. The abysmal deeps of Personality, the hidden secrets of each man's nature, his qualities and faculties which are buried far below the surface. Cf. Arthur Hallam's Essay, *Theodicea Novissima*: "I believe that redemption is universal in so far as is left no obstacle between man and God but man's own will; that indeed is in the power of God's election, with whom alone rest the abysmal secrets of personality." The sympathies and emotions of the heart still exist in the innermost depths of the Soul, although they have been put out of sight and use.

225. When she would think etc., when she wished to resume her pensive contemplation, the mysterious power intervened, and threw her mental faculties into confusion. The allusion is to the vision at Belshazzar's feast (Bible, *Daniel*, v.) of the fingers of a man's hands that "wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace ... And this is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Tekel: Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

229. Deep dread etc. The Soul is suddenly struck with the knowledge that she is *alone*, and that her life, passed in unsympathetic isolation from the struggles and toils of humanity, is but a hateful solitude, a living death. But she cannot easily give up her belief in the selfish worship of Beauty: she first scorns her own weakness; then, recovering her self-conceit, she retracts her scorn of herself with a cynical sneer at her change of mood.

235. Whereof the strong etc., whose foundations have always, since I first began to remember, seemed immovable.

237-244. The shows of Beauty with which the Soul has hitherto satisfied her gaze give place to ghastly images of decay and corruption and spectres of horror.

241. And hollow shades etc. Cf. Beckford's description of the lost souls undergoing in the Hall of Eblis, in the last chapter of *Vathek*: "Soliman stood his hands towards heaven in token of supplication, and the Caliph discerned through his bosom, which was as transparent as crystal, his heart enveloped in flames."

242. fretted, eaten by worms. The O. E. *fretan* is a contraction of *foretan*, from *for-*, intensive prefix, and *etan*, to eat.

243. three-months-old, that had been dead for three months.

247. Mid onward-sloping motions etc. The Soul becomes aware that in her isolation she has cut herself off from participation in the universal life and progress of mankind. The sud-

den perception of the never-ending advance of the human race from lower to higher conditions, its approach to the

"one far off divine event
To which the whole creation moves,"

startles the Soul into a knowledge that she alone is left in stagnation without change or progress. onward-sloping, gradually advancing.

249. A still salt pool etc. Understand "she seemed."

252. moon-led waters white. Cf. *Maud*, i. xiv. 17, "as white As ocean-foam in the moon;" *moon-led*=tidal.

253. choral starry dance. Cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, v. 177, 178:—

"And ye five other wandering fires that move
In mystic dance not without song."

The regular motions of the planets are often represented under the metaphors of rhythmical song and dance. The Pythagoreans were the first to call these symmetrical movements a 'dance.' They also believed that the revolutions of the heavenly bodies produced loud harmonious sounds—the "music of the spheres."

255. Circumstance, the surrounding sphere of the Heavens. The Ptolemaic Astronomy represents the universe as "an enormous azure round of space scooped or carved out of Chaos, and communicating aloft with the Æmpyrean, but consisting within itself of ten Orbs or hollow Spheres in succession, wheeling one within the other, down to the stationary nest of our small Earth at the centre, with the elements of water, air and fire that are immediately around it" (Masson, *Introd. to Milton's Poetical Works*).

256. Roll'd round by one fix'd law. For illustrations of Tennyson's recognition of the movement of Law throughout the universe, see General Introduction, pp. viii., ix.

257. Back on herself etc., her pride in her isolation was turned into stinging remorse. Cf. *The Last Tournament*, 450:—

"the scorpion-worm that twists in hell
And stings itself to everlasting death."

It was a belief of the old naturalists that a scorpion if enclosed within a ring of flame from which it could not escape would turn its sting upon itself: it thus became an emblem of the stings of conscience.

261. She, mouldering etc. Cf. *In Memoriam*, xi. 19, 20:—

"And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving deep."

And *The Lotos-Eaters*, 95: "climbing up the climbing wave." Also *St. Agnes' Eve*, 7: "creeping with the creeping hours," and *In the Valley of Caqueretz*, 2: "Deepening thy voice with deepening of the night."

262. tenfold, utterly. Cf. *Sir Galahad*, 3, and note.

263. *exiled*, the last syllable is accented, *exiléd*.

264. *Lost to her place and name*, leaving her proper sphere empty and her life's duties unfulfilled. Cf *Martin and Vivien*, *ad fin.*, "lost to life and use and name and fame."

266. *for her despair*, because of the despair she felt.

267. *dreadful time*, *dreadful eternity*, a life of misery in this world and the next.

273. *girt round etc.*, surrounded by impenetrable darkness. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 488, "compass'd round by the blind wall of night."

275. *Far off etc.* After a period of agonizing doubt and despair, the Soul's sympathies slowly awake and she becomes vaguely conscious of the human world outside her isolated palace. dully. Tennyson has "stilly sound" (*Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, 103), and "shrilly whinnys" (*Demeter and Persephone*, 44): see note thereon.

282. *one deep cry*, the united roar.

283. *'I have found etc.* The Soul at first is filled with despair at her inability to enter into the new sphere of action which she has discovered in the world: she does not see how she is to exercise the kindly emotions so long left in disuse, and thus become "one with her kind."

285. *'I am on fire within.* A burning sense of remorse consumes the heart, for which the Soul despairs of a remedy.

286. *no murmur*, not even the faintest sound.

289. *So when etc.* After a year of despair the Soul sees that it is only by abandoning her proud elevation above her fellows that she can preserve herself from ruin. She descends from her "intellectual throne," abandons her "high palace," and endeavours in humility and in the duties of common life to learn the lesson of love.

293. *Yet pull not down etc.* But refinement need not be exclusive, and the culture of the intellect does not necessarily imply a deadening of the natural sympathies. If the beauties of the palace are not reserved for selfish contemplation, but are shared "with others," the Soul may well inhabit it once more, and lead therein a perfect life.

294. *lightly*, gracefully.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS poem was first published in 1832, but it has since undergone considerable alteration at its author's hands. Its diction, as we have it, is highly wrought and polished, and its style is elaborately brilliant. It is, like the *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, remarkable for its pictorial art—its splendour of description. Tennyson's "avoidance of the commonplace" is illustrated in this, perhaps, more than in any other of his poems. Thus he writes "argent" (l. 158) rather than "silver," "orbs" (l. 171) rather than "eyes," while in the note to line 113 will be found a crowning example of the same tendency. In *Poems by Two Brothers* occurs one entitled *Antony and Cleopatra*, which is probably by Tennyson, and which seems to show that the subject of "the Egyptian" was one that had impressed his imagination even in his boyish days. She and Jephthah's daughter form the chief heroines of the *Dream*. The clear-cut outlines of the two figures, placed side by side, are thrown out with an almost startling distinctness by the striking contrast between them with their surroundings, as depicted in the poem—the one, "a queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes," and the other, "a maiden pure." The portrait of Cleopatra, however, is more elaborately drawn than that of the other, and is the most highly finished of the whole gallery.

NOTES.

1. *eyelids shade*. Cf. *The Talking Oak*, 209: 'Her eyelids dropt their silken eaves.'

2. 'The Legend ... Women,' a poem by Chaucer, in a prologue and nine legends, celebrating Cleopatra, Thisbe, Dido, Hypsipyle and Medea, Lucrece, Ariadne, Philomela, Phillis, and Hypermnestra. Cleopatra is thus the only one of Chaucer's women portrayed by Tennyson. The "goodness" of these "far-renowned brides of ancient song" consisted mainly in their faithfulness to husbands who were faithless to them.

3. *the morning star of song*. Cf. *In Memoriam*, lxxvi 9, 10, "the matin songs that woke The darkness of our planet." Chaucer (A.D. 1328-1400) is called the morning star of poetry because he is the first of the great English poets, and heralded, as it were, the approach of the brilliant Elizabethan age of poetry. See Denham, *Elegy on Cowley*, ll. 1, 2:—

"Old Chaucer, like the morning-star,
To us discovers day from far."

3. who made ... below, who made his "music of the spheres" audible on earth; who delighted mankind with his sublime, "heaven-descended" strains.

5. Dan Chaucer. *Dan* is the Spanish *don*, from Lat. *dominus*, lord, master, sir; a title of honour originally applied to monks and afterwards used familiarly or sportively, as here. Shakspeare (*L. L. L.* iii. 182) has "Dan Cupid," and Spenser (*Faery Queen*, iv. 2. 32) writes of Geoffrey Chaucer, whom he regarded as his poetic master:—

"Dan Chaucer, well of English undefyled,"

and again (*Ib.* vii. 7. 9):—

"Old Dan Geoffry, in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell."

warbler. To *warble* is to sing as a bird, to carol. Hence it is applied to natural and spontaneous, as opposed to artistic and elaborate, poetry. So Milton, *L'Allegro*, 133, 134:—

"Or sweetest Shakespear, fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild."

whose sweet ... still, whose poetry formed an introduction to those outpourings of verse (alluding to Spenser, Sidney, Shakspeare, etc.) of which the glorious age of Queen Elizabeth is full, and which we still read and admire. The "times" are "spacious" not on account of their length, but because they give room to so many great persons (poets, statesmen etc.) and mighty events.

9-13. the knowledge ... tears. My appreciation of the poet's skill kept me from entering into and distinctly apprehending the subject-matter of his poem, though at the same time those strange stories affected me with the deepest pity. Charged, filled.

14. wherever light illumineth, wherever records of the past have come to light.

15. Beauty and anguish. I saw that everywhere it was the fate of beautiful women to undergo wrong and suffering; beauty was always accompanied by anguish and led to death. Cf. Byron, *Childe Harold*, iv. 42:—

"The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past ——"

(a passage which is a free translation of Filicaja's *Sonnet to Italy*).

17. brides of ancient song, Chaucer's heroines: see note to l. 2.

18. peopled ... stars. The dark void of my slumber was filled with the images of these women, conspicuous for their beauty and their wrongs.

19. insult ... wars. The *insults* etc. were inflicted on these women, and the *wars* were on their account.

21. clattering ... hoofs. Notice how the sound echoes the sense in this line. See notes to *Morte d'Arthur*, 50, 69, 138.

22. crowds, i.e. crowds of women who had taken refuge in the temples.

27. the tortoise. See *Demeter*, 96, note. The "tortoise" (Lat. *testudo*) was a sort of shed with a strong roof overlaid with raw hides, which was placed upon rollers, and under shelter of which besiegers could approach the walls of a fortress they wished to batter or undermine. Originally it consisted of shields held locked together by a body of men over their heads, and so presented the appearance of the shell of a tortoise. The besieged tried to crush the "tortoise" by hurling heavy masses of stone or masonry upon it. See Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* v. 43; Vergil, *Æneid*, ii. 440-449. Cf. Fairfax's *Tasso*, xi. 33:—

"And o'er their heads an iron penthouse vast
They built by joining many a shield and targe."

29, 30. burst .. fire. The blasts of hot air that precede the advancing flames come rushing through the temple-doors (see l. 22) as they give way before the conflagration.

33. Squadrons and squares. *Squadron* is formed, with the suffix *-one*, from It. *squadra*, which again is the same word as the Eng. *square*; and both are from Lat. (*ex*) *quadrare*, which is from *quadrus* (for *quaterus*), four-cornered, formed from *quatuor*, four. brazen plates, armour composed of plates of that metal.

34. Scaffolds. The poet had probably in his mind's eye the fate of such women as Mary Queen of Scots and Lady Jane Grey. still sheets of water, such as those into which the women of Turkish harems, suspected of faithlessness, were thrown. divers woes, various calamities. *Divers* is the old Fr. nasc., of which the fem. is *diverse*, (Lat. *diversus*, various).

37. So shape etc. "When a man is wide awake he thinks and imagines connectedly; when he is deep asleep his dreams have again a dream-like coherence and consistency; in the interval between perfect wakefulness and perfect sleep image follows image without definable bond of connexion" (Bayne).

38. Bluster ... way. The tide is running landwards and the wind is blowing in the same direction, so that the waves break the more violently.

39, 40. crisp ... spray. The foam-flakes are torn by the wind from the edge of the surf and go flying along the beach. *Crisp* means 'wrinkled' (Lat. *crispus*, curled) rather than 'brittle.'

41. I started ... start. Cf. *Ænone*, 18, *Enoch Arden*, 596: "He watch'd or seem'd to watch"; and Vergil, *Æneid*, vi. 454, *Aut violet aut vidisse putat*, 'He sees or thinks he sees'; and Milton's (*Par. Lost*, i. 713) "sees, or dreams he sees."

43, 44. *As when ... cheek.* As when the impulse to do a noble deed suddenly courses through the brain and sends the blood surging into the cheeks; so I started in my sleep with a sense of pain at what I saw, being determined to perform some heroic action on behalf of these suffering women, and tried to vent my indignation in words.

46. *saddle-bow*, the arched front of the ancient saddle.

47. *leaguer'd*, i.e. beleaguered, besieged. Germ. *lager*, a camp.

49. *All those ... sleep.* Hitherto the writer has been but dozing, and the imagery of his dream has been clearly defined, with sharp-cut "edges"; but now sleep is gaining the mastery, and his thoughts gradually lose their definite shape and become indistinct. The metaphor is from a torrent which rolls the stones that it carries with it against one another and so makes them round and smooth, till at last, with no distinction of shape, they all rest together in the bed of the lake or the river into which the torrent falls. A similar metaphor occurs in *In Memoriam*, lxxxix. 39, 40 :—

"For ground in yonder social mill
We rub each other's angles down."

54. *an old wood.* The wood represents the Past, into which, in his dream, he wandered back. *fresh-wash'd ... blue.* Clear and bright in the dewy morning air, the fresh pure light of the morning star (Venus) throbb'd (or pulsated) in the deep steady blue of the sky.

57. *boles*, stems, trunks. Cf. *bowl* and *ball*.

58. *dusky*, dark with the shadow of the overhanging boughs.

59. *fledged ... sheath.* As young birds with downy feathers, so the branches were covered with fresh green leaves newly burst from the bud. Cf. *The Lotos-Eaters*, 71.

61-4. *The dim .. again.* In the "unblissful clime" of his dream the morning light, dim and red (as when seen through a mist), had faded away almost as soon as it appeared, and only sent a few chill and cheerless gleams across the glimmering plain beneath. The morn is represented as having half fallen, never again to rise, as she slept across the eastern horizon, the threshold of the sun—thus figuring the incomplete and ineffectual day-break. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 438, "the dead flame of the fallen day."

70. *festooning ... tree*, joining tree to tree by their trailing wreaths.

71. *lush*, luxuriant in growth. *Lush* is short for *lushious*, which, again, is a corruption of *lustious*, formed by adding the

suffix *-ous* to *lusty* (Skeat). Cf. Shaks., *Tempest*, ii. 1. 52:—
 "How lush and lusty the grass looks! how green!"

72. *anemone*, the wind-flower (Gr. *ἀνέμος*, the wind).

73. *I knew* etc. The landscape of his dream seemed familiar to him in all its details; he recognised everything as having seen it before in the gay and innocent days of his youth.

74. *the tearful ... dawn*, the dank, dewy twilight of the faint, dull dawn.

78. *empty*, vacant, and so ready to receive any new impressions. It is well known that a scent will often bring vividly back to the mind some old scene or event.

85. *within call*, within calling distance.

87. *A daughter of the gods*. Helen was the daughter of Jupiter and Leda. For *divinely tall*, cf. *The Princess*, Prologue, 40, "Her stature more than mortal." So Ovid (*Fasti*, ii. 503) describes Romulus as *pulcher et humano major*, 'beautiful and of more than human size.'

89. *Her loveliness ... speech*. Her beauty so abashed and surprised me that it prevented me from uttering the words of admiration that rose quickly to my lips.

91. *The star-like ... eyes*, the calm, pathetic looks of sorrow coming from the beautiful eyes of the daughter of a god. Cf. *Aylmer's Field*, 691-692:

"For her fresh and innocent eyes
 Had such a star of morning in their blue."

92. *in her place*, in the place where she was standing.

94. *No one ... destiny*. Fate ordered my life for me, and no one can alter or amend what fate decrees.

95. *Many ... died*, i.e. in the Trojan war, fighting on Helen's account.

99. *free*, readily, boldly.

100. *one*, i.e. *Iphigeneia*, the daughter of Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek army in the Trojan war. When the Greek fleet, on its way to Troy, was detained by contrary winds at Aulis, in order to appease the gods Iphigeneia was sacrificed to Artemis. See the descriptions of the sacrifice in Æschylus, *Agamem.* 225-249, and Lucretius, *De Rerum Nat.* i. 85-100.

101. *sick*, full of disgust and loathing.

106. *Which men* etc. This line originally stood:

"Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears."

The change has apparently been made that there might be no doubt what the "sad place" was. *Iron years* means 'times when men were harsh and cruel.' Cf. *Maud*, Part I. xviii. iv.

'iron skies'; *In Memoriam*, xc. 8: 'an iron welcome'; *Aylmer's Field*, 732: 'iron mouth'; *Harold*, iii. 2: 'this iron world.'

109. my voice .. dream, my voice was choked with my sobs, as people in dreams try to speak and cannot. Cf. *The Lotos-Eaters*, 6.

111. with wolfish eyes. They hungered impatiently for her death, that they might continue their voyage. See note to l. 100.

113. The high masts ... more. The masts "flicker" and the crowds etc. "waver," because her eyes were misty with tears. "The bright death" is the flashing knife-blade, the effect being put for the cause. With this use of 'death' for 'instrument of death' Mr. Churton Collins compares Sophocles, *Electra*, 1395, νεκρόν ητον αίμα, 'newly-whetted blood.' When first published (1830), this stanza ran thus:—

"The tall masts flicker'd as they lay afloat;
The temples, and the people, and the shore;
One drew a sharp knife thro' my tender throat,
Slowly—and nothing more."

116. Touch'd: and I knew no more. For other examples of this break after the first half-foot of a line, representing sudden, startling action, see General Introduction, p. xxi.

117. a downward brow, a brow bent towards the ground.

118-20. I would ... home. So in Homer, *Iliad*, iii. 173-175, Helen says that it would have been well had she died when she left her home.

120. my home, the palace of Menelaus at Lacedaemon, which she left in order to accompany Paris to Troy.

121-2. her slow ... sea. Her words, slowly and clearly articulated, fell upon the silence with that startling distinctness with which the first heavy raindrops of a thunderstorm fall upon a tranquil and motionless sea.

124. That I etc. Cf. l. 131, which explains this line.

125. rise, bank, knoll.

126. one, i.e. Cleopatra, queen of Egypt. Mark Antony repudiated Octavia for her, and the battle of Actium followed (B.C. 31), in which he was defeated by Augustus Caesar. Hearing that Cleopatra was dead, he stabbed himself, but was afterwards carried into her presence, and died in her arms. She then attempted to fascinate Augustus ("that cold-blooded Caesar") with her charms, as she had fascinated Julius Caesar previously; but, not succeeding, she poisoned herself (for the story of her death by the bite of an asp is probably an invention) and so deprived Augustus of the glory of carrying her as a captive in his triumphal procession ("With a worm I balked his fame"). Cf. Horace, *Carm.* I. 37, "Invidens Deduci superbo triumpho."

128. *Brow-bound ... gold*, with a tiara of sparkling gold round her brows. Cf. Shaks., *Coriolanus*, ii. 2. 102: "Brow-bound with the oak"; also *Richard III.* iv. 1. 59-61:—

"I would to God that the inclusive verge
Of golden metal that must round my brow
Were red-hot steel, to sear me to the brain!"

and Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, i. :—

"And thine omnipotence a crown of pain,
To cling like burning gold round thy dissolving brain,"

—where the torture of the red-hot iron band or crown is alluded to.

130. 'I govern'd ... moods.' I governed men in all their moods because I could easily change and accommodate myself to them. Cf. Shaks., *Ant. and Cleop.* ii. 2. 240, 241:—

"Age cannot wither her nor custom stale
Her infinite variety."

132-4. *like the moon . flow*. As the tides follow the moon's changes, so men's passions were subject to my wishes and caprices. Cf. Ford, *Witch of Edmonton*, ii. 2:—

"You are the powerful moon of my blood's sea,
To make it ebb and flow into my face,
As your looks change."

137. 'Nay—yet, etc. She corrects her previous statement; there is another thing that annoys her, viz., that her charms had no power over Augustus. See note to l. 126.

139. *prythee* or *priethee* is a fusion of 'pray thee,' which is for 'I pray thee.'

141. *with whom ... neck*. They were superior to fortune, and commanded all the gifts that she could bestow. Cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, vi. 771:—

"He on the wings of cherub rode sublime,"

and *Sonnet to Cromwell*:—

"on the neck of crowned fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies."

Sublime means 'aloft,' 'on high' (Lat. *sublimis*, lofty).

142. *The Nilus ... nod*. The river Nile overflows its banks during a fixed period every year. At our nod, at our bidding. Cf. Lat. *numen*, 'nod,' and so 'command, will.'

145. *We drank ... sleep*. Libyan, i.e. African, or her Egyptian. Cf. Shaks., *Ant. and Cleop.* ii. 2. 182:—

"*Cleo*. I drank him (Antony) to his bed,"

and *Id.* ii. 4. 21: "We did sleep the day out of countenance and made the night light with drinking."

146. *out-burn'd Canopus*, remained alight after Canopus had set, a brilliant star of the first magnitude in the rudder of Argo, a

160. *aspick's*. *Aspic* is the Provençal form of the old Fr. *aspe* (Gr. *ἀσπίς*). Shakspeare (*Ant. and Cleop.* v. 2. 296, 354) also has *aspick*, perhaps by assimilation to *basilisk*.

161. *a Queen*, *i.e.* retaining all my queenly dignity and state. See Shakspeare's description of her death, *Ant. and Cleop.* v. 2. 283-331, and cf. Horace, *Odes*, i. 37, "Privata," 'unqueen'd,' and "Non humilis mulier," 'no submissive woman.'

163. *a name*, *i.e.* renowned, famous. Cf. *Ulysses*, 11.

164. *Worthy... spouse*, worthy of a husband who was a Roman and not of some inferior race. So in Shaks. *Ant. and Cleop.* iv. 15, 87, Cleopatra says—

"Let's do it after the high Roman fashion,
And make death proud to take us."

165-8. *her... utterance*. Like a full-stringed lyre when it is played upon, so her musical voice, acted upon by various emotions, passed from one tone to another, and went through the whole scale of notes with living force. For "struck by all passion," cf. *Locksley Hall*, 33 :—

"Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the chords with
might."

Cf. also Milton, *Par. Lost*, xi. 561-563, and *L'Allegro*, 142.

171. *fill'd... sound*. The piercing light of her eyes, when she raised them from the ground, filled up the pauses in her speech so delightfully that I did not notice when she stopped speaking. Cf. E. B. Browning, *The Romance of the Swan's Nest* :—

"The smile she softly uses
Fills the silence like a speech."

173. *Still.. darts*. Cupid still heated the tips of his arrows with the fire of her eyes, *i.e.* still, as in her life-time, her glances were the most powerful incentives to love. In Spenser's *Hymn of Beauty*, 241, beauty's eyes are represented as "darting their little fierce lances," and Milton has "love-darting eyes" (*Comus*, 753).

174, 175. *they.. Love*. As burning-glasses collect and concentrate the sun's rays, so her eyes gathered into their two bright orbs all the power of love.

177. *undazzled*, here used intransitively, 'ceased to be dazzled.' His feelings had before been overcome by her beauty and splendour.

179. *the crested bird*, the cock, called by Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 455, *crinatus ales*, 'the crested bird.' Cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, vii. 443 :—

"the crested cock whose clarion sounds
The silent hours,"

and Shaks., *Hamlet*, i. 150 :—

"The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn."

181-188. These two stanzas afford a fine example of Tennyson's melody of diction. Observe the number of broad vowel sounds and of liquid consonants. See General Introduction, p. xx.

184. *Far-heard ... moon, heard a long way off in the stillness of the moon-lit night.* Cf. *In the Valley of Caunteretz*, 2 :—

"All along the valley, stream that flashest white,
Deepening thy voice with deepening of the night."

187. *the splinter'd ... shine, the spires or points of the jagged rocks shine like silver in the moon-light.*

189. *as one, etc.* As a man, musing on the sunny lawn outside some cathedral, when he hears through the open door the organ sending its waves of sound up to the ceiling and down to the floor and the singing of the anthem by the choir, is captivated by the music and comes to a stand-still,—so, etc. *Laves* means 'bathes, pervades.'

195. *her father's vow.* Jephthah, the Gileadite, vowed that if God would give him victory over the Ammonites he would offer up as a burnt offering "whatsoever came forth from the doors of his house to meet him" when he returned from battle. "And Jephthah came to Mizpah into his house, and behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances" (Bible, *Judges*, xi.). To *save* means to redeem, to fulfil, the vow. Some authorities, however, consider it improbable that Jephthah's daughter was actually immolated, since the Jewish law forbade human sacrifices: they maintain that she was rather condemned to perpetual celibacy.

199. *welcome light, gay greeting.* The *timbrel* (Lat. *tympanum*, a drum) is a kind of tambourine.

201. 'Heaven ... oath.' That rash vow of your father's is placed first by God on the list of crimes, as being the most heinous.

202. *she ... high, she answered loftily, proudly.*

203. *nor once alone, nor should I be ready to die only once.* *I would* = I should be willing.

205. *Single, solitary*; she was her father's only child.

207. *ere my flower etc., while I was still a young maiden, and before I could become a mother.*

209. 'My God .. grave. The love of my God, of my country, and of my father were stronger than my natural love of life, and formed a threefold cord that gently lowered me into my grave; i.e. it was the love of these three that induced me patiently to submit to death.

213. 'No fair ... blame. I am destined to have no son to take away from me the reproach of being unmarried and childless. Among the Jews this was a reproach to women, because each

hoped to be the maternal ancestor of the promised Messiah. Cf. Antigone's lament (Sophocles, *Antig.* 846-876). With maiden blame compare Shaks., *Julius Caesar*, i. 2. 8, 9:—

"The barren, touched in this holy chase,
Shake off their sterile curse."

216. *Leaving* etc. For two months before her sacrifice (according to the poem) she "went with her companions and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains" (*Judges*, xi. 37, 38).

218. *promise...bower*, the hope of marriage and of having children. "Bower" has its old meaning of *chamber*.

220. *battled*, embattled. Old Fr. *embastiller*, to furnish with fortifications. The word has no etymological connexion with *battle*.

225. *Saw...flame*, saw God cleave the darkness asunder with the lightning flash. Cf. Horace, *Odes*, i. 34: *Diespiter igni corusco nubila dividens*, 'Jupiter dividing the clouds with glittering fire.' Cf. *Maud*, Part I. l. iv.: "I heard The shrilled shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night."

226. *everlasting hills*, a Biblical expression, and therefore appropriate in the mouth of a Jewish maiden. See Bible, *Genesis*, xlix. 26.

227, 228. *I heard ..ills*. I heard God's voice speaking to me in the thunder, and I was so strengthened by it that my grief was turned into a feeling of superiority to all human ills.

231. *How beautiful* etc. Cf. Horace, *Odes*, iii. 2. 13, *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, 'A sweet and comely thing it is to die for one's country.'

234. *I subdued me*, I subjected myself. *Me* is reflexive.

235. *I fell*, I was sacrificed.

236. *Sweetens the spirit*, takes all bitterness from my heart.

238, 239. *Hew'd...Minneth*. See Bible, *Judges*, xi. 33, "He smote them (the Ammonites) from Aroer until thou come to Minnith." Aroer was on the river Arnon (*ib.* 26).

241. *locked her lips*, i.e. ceased speaking. Cf. Milton, *Comus*, 756, "I had not thought to have unlocked my lips."

243. *Thridding*, passing through. *Thrid* is a doublet of *thread*. Cf. *In Memoriam*, xcvii. 21: "He thread the labyrinth of the mind"; and Dryden, *Pal. and Arc.*, 491: "the thrid thrids the brake." *boskage*, thickets, jungle, *bush*; which last is the M. E. *busch*, *busk*. Shakspeare (*Temp.* iv. 1. 81) has "my bosky acres" and Milton (*Comus*, 313) has "every bosky bourn." Cf. *The Princess*, i. 110, "bosks of wilderness," and *Sir John Oldcastle*, 122, "green boskage."

247, 248. *When...dead*. The close of the old year and the commencement of the new year are celebrated in England by ringing

the church bells. Shortly before the clock strikes twelve at night the bells stop ringing and begin again when the hour has struck. Cf. *In Memoriam*, cvi. 2, 3:—

“The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.”

See also *The Death of the Old Year*.

251, 252. *Rosamond* ... *be*. I am known as the *fair* Rosamond, if now that I am dead, I am still *fair*. The “*fair* Rosamond,” daughter of Walter de Clifford, was the mistress of Henry II. She is one of the chief characters in Tennyson’s drama *Becket*, and Samuel Daniel has a poem entitled *The Complaint of Rosamond*, in which, from the lower world, she tells her sad story.

254. *see the light*, i.e. of the sun; ‘have been born.’ ‘See’ is for ‘have seen.’

255. *dragon* . *Eleanor*. Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry’s queen, poisoned Rosamond, according to the story. In “*dragon eyes*” there is an allusion to the sleepless dragon that kept watch over the garden of the Hesperides. Cf. Milton, *Comus*, 393-395:—

“Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree,
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye.”

Dragon means lit. ‘seeing one,’ i.e. ‘sharp-sighted one’ (participle of Gk. *δέκνομαι*, I see).

257. *fallen* ... *trust*, having lost all hope of comfort and all confidence in herself, under her overmastering dread of Eleanor.

259. *Fulvia*’s. Fulvia was Antony’s first wife, so that Fulvia was to her what Eleanor was to Rosamond. Hence, with her mind full of jealous hatred to Fulvia, Cleopatra substitutes her name here for Eleanor’s as a sort of type of “the married woman.” It might be put, “You should have clung to *your* Fulvia’s waist.”

261-3. *With that* etc. As I heard Cleopatra’s indignant words, the morning beams gradually acted upon my brain and put an end to the mysterious state of sleep. *folded*, enclosed and secluded from outer things.

263. *The captain* .. *sky*. The morning star, which presided over his dreams at their commencement (see ll. 54-56).

266, 267. *her* ... *head*. Margaret Roper, daughter of Sir Thomas More, who, after her father’s unjust execution (hence “murdered”) in 1535, got his head taken down from London Bridge, kept it as a sacred relic, and died with it in her arms.

267. *Joan of Arc*. The Maid, who in 1428, led the French army to victory, raised the siege of Orleans, defeated the English general Talbot at Patay, and saw Charles VII. crowned at Rheims. She was afterwards captured and burnt at the stake as a witch in 1431.

271. *her...death.* Eleanor of Castile, wife of Edward I., who knew how true it is that Love can vanquish the fear of Death (for herself). Edward had been stabbed by the poisoned (?) dagger of a Saracen assassin, and the story was that she sucked the poison from the wound, and so saved his life.

273. *No memory...sight.* As men make strong efforts to recall to their minds great thoughts that they have forgotten, but of which they now and then get an inkling; so I, with equal effort, tried to collect and enumerate every little sound and sight, however indistinct. Cf. *Harold*, v. 1:—

“Our waking thoughts
Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the pools
Of sullen slumber, and arise again
Disjointed.”

277. *With what—how eagerly.* This double exclamation in a single sentence is a Greek construction. The English idiom would be: “With what a dull pain was I encompass’d, and how eagerly did I seek” etc.

281. *As when etc., i.e. ‘I lamented as when’ etc.* Cf. “Tears, idle tears” that rise in “thinking of the days that are no more” (*The Princess*, iv. 25).

285-8. *Because...heat.* As choice herbs, that are culled and eaten to cool the fever-parched tongue, but which fail from their very sweetness to do so effectually, become themselves withered, and leave the body still a prey to its fever; so all words, however carefully selected, fail to recall the bitterness of feeling that is mixed with the sweetness; and hence do not give the full expression of the emotion, while the heart is overcome by the strength of its own feelings. Cf. Bible, *Psalms*, xxxix 2, 3: “I was dumb with silence . . . and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned.”

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS poem was first published in 1842.

King Arthur had been made the hero of so many fictitious adventures by the romancers and poets of the Middle Ages that the belief was long held by many writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that he was an entirely mythical personage. Modern investigations, however, have proved that Arthur, or Artus, was the name of a sixth century war leader of the tribes inhabiting the old divisions of Britain known as Cumbria

and Strathclyde (stretching from the Severn to the Clyde) against the encroaching Saxons from the East and the Picts and Scots from the North; and that five or six centuries later the name of King Arthur had come to stand for an ideal of royal wisdom, chivalric virtue, and knightly prowess, which was recognised alike in England, France, and Germany.

The earliest legends of his exploits are to be found in the *Welsh Tales* and in the French and German *Romances of the Round Table*, the stories having crossed the Channel into Brittany, where they were embodied in Breton lays.

Between 1130 and 1147, Geoffrey of Monmouth introduced the legends about King Arthur into his Latin *History of the Britons*.

In 1196, Walter Map (or Mapes), Archdeacon of Oxford, gave spiritual life to the old tales recounting merely deeds of animal courage and passion, by introducing the legend of the *Quest of the Holy Grail*, an allegorical description of a good man's endeavour after a knowledge of truth and of God, to be gained only through a life of purity. *Holy Grail*, a translation of the word *Sancgreal*, was, the legends tell us, the dish used by Joseph of Arimathea to catch some of the blood of Christ as He hung wounded on the cross. Joseph brought the dish with him to England, where it was lost. The search for it, the 'Quest of the Holy Grail,' was undertaken by many of the knights of the Round Table. *Grail* is from the old French *grail*, Low Latin *gradale*, allied to the Greek *κράτης*, a cup, since the dish was confused with the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper. See Tennyson's Idyll of *The Holy Grail*, where it is described as—

"The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord
Drank at the last sad supper with his own."

The derivation of 'Sancgreal' from *Sanguis Realis*, the *real blood* of Christ, is erroneous, and has arisen from a wrong division of the letters, *san grael* being mistakenly written 'sang real.'

Sir Thomas Malory, or Malore, an English knight, published in English his *Morte d' Arthur*, or *Death of Arthur*, an account, derived from French, Welsh, and English romances of the birth of Arthur, the formation of the knightly order of the Round Table, the exploits of the knights, and, finally, of Arthur's death or passing away. The book was printed by Caxton in 1485. It is from Malory's book that Tennyson derived most of the incidents narrated in his *Idylls of the King* and in the earlier *Morte d' Arthur*.

Many other English authors have taken King Arthur as the central figure of their poems. Spenser, in his *Fairy Queen*, makes 'Prince Arthure' the type of 'magnificence,' i.e. of 'noble deeds,' and under the figure of Arthure's knights represents the various virtues striving heavenwards and helped on their way by Arthure.

By the writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the legend of Arthur was regarded as purely the invention of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Milton originally intended to make Arthur the hero of his great epic, but doubting "who he was and whether any such reigned in history," rejected the Round Table as a subject in favour of the loss of Paradise.

Blackmore wrote two epics—*Prince Arthur* in ten books, and *King Arthur* in twelve books.

Dryden produced a dramatic opera entitled *King Arthur*, an allegory of the events of the reign of Charles II. He gives a melancholy account of a projected epic, with King Arthur or Edward the Black Prince as hero, in his *Essay on Satire*; cf. Scott, *Marmion*, canto i. *Introd.*

In later times, Sir Walter Scott edited with notes the old romance of *Sir Tristrem*, and introduced into his *Bridal of Triermaine*, a story of King Arthur's love for a fairy princess. In 1838 Lady Charlotte Guest published *The Mabinogion*, a translation into English of the Welsh legends contained in "the red book of Hergest," which is in the library of Jesus College, Oxford. From *The Mabinogion* Tennyson has taken the framework of the story of his Idyll of *Geraint and Enid*.

In 1848 Bulwer Lytton produced an epic, in six-lined stanzas, entitled *King Arthur*.

Lastly, Tennyson in his earlier poems shows that the legends of King Arthur and his knights had taken hold of his youthful imagination. We are told that, when quite a boy, he chanced upon a copy of Malory's book, and often with his brothers held mimic tournaments after the fashion of Knights of the Round Table. In *The Palace of Art*, 105, Arthur is spoken of as "mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son," while the poems, *Sir Lancelot and Guinevere* (a fragment), *The Lady of Shalott*, *Sir Galahad*, and, finally, *Morte d'Arthur*, are all founded on incidents narrated in the legends. Tennyson's great work, *Idylls of the King*, as now published, is prefaced by *The Coming of Arthur*, an account of Arthur's mysterious birth and of his coronation; then comes *The Round Table*, a series of pictures of the feats of Arthur's knights and of the life at Arthur's court, and the whole concludes with *The Passing of Arthur*, an account of Arthur's last great battle and his death. In this last poem is incorporated the earlier *Morte d'Arthur*.

The *Morte d'Arthur* is introduced by some prefatory lines entitled *The Epic*, the thread of which is taken up again in some concluding lines added at the close. *The Epic* represents four friends sitting together on Christmas Eve; one of them, named Everard, is prevailed upon to read aloud portions of an epic poem which he had composed at college. The poem was originally in twelve books, but the author had thrown them into the fire as being "faint Homeric echoes, nothing worth,"

in which "nothing new was said"; and the *Morte d'Arthur* is represented to be the only remaining fragment of the larger work. One of the friends, parson Holmes, had been lamenting "the general decay of faith right through the world," and it is as a kind of answer to his despondent talk that *Morte d'Arthur* is read aloud.

In *The Epic* and in the lines added at the conclusion of the original *Morte d'Arthur*, and again in the dedication *To the Queen* at the end of the last Idyll, Tennyson tells us of the moral purpose he has meant to infuse into his great work. The Arthur herein depicted is no mere reproduction of Geoffrey's or Malory's chivalric hero, and the interest of the poem does not lie in its being a picture of old times such as would please an antiquarian. Its purpose is to typify the continual struggle in man's heart between the lower and the higher instincts of his nature. It shadows "Sense at war with soul," evil fighting against good, and overcoming it. But the triumph of evil is short-lived. Excalibur may indeed be cast away and vanish from the earth, for, in the moral as in the physical world, without change there can be no progress. But "Arthur will come again," and new weapons from heaven will be given to the champions of Truth in successive generations. The old faith that Arthur was not dead but would return, healed of his wound, to help mankind, has its counterpart in modern Optimism, which looks forward to the steady improvement of the human race and its advance towards higher and nobler conditions.

It will be observed that the *Morte d'Arthur* is more closely modelled on Homer than are any of the Idylls. In fact, in the concentration of the interest on the hero, in the straightforward simplicity and martial terseness of the narrative, as well as in the strong vigour of its Saxon diction, this poem stands quite apart and in marked contrast to the great series in which it was subsequently inserted.

NOTES.

The incidents in Arthur's career that immediately preceded his death are briefly these. The queen, Guinevere, had left the king's court, and fled to hiding at the nunnery of Amesbury, owing to the discovery by the treacherous Modred, the king's nephew, of her love for Lancelot. King Arthur had gone to attack Lancelot in the north; during his absence Modred had raised a revolt, and had had himself crowned king. The king marched south, and pursued Modred to the west coast. On his way he stopped at Amesbury, and had the farewell interview with the repentant queen so beautifully described in the Idyll of *Guinevere*. Arthur's host came up with that of Modred on the extreme south-west coast, and in the ensuing battle, Arthur slew

Modred with his own hand, but was himself mortally wounded in the encounter. The poem commences at the point where Arthur has just given and received the fatal blow.

1. **So all day long.** 'So' = 'as above described,' and calls attention to the fact that the poem is supposed to be but a fragment of a larger work.

3. **King Arthur's table,** the knights of the Round Table, *i.e.* of the order of knighthood established by King Arthur. The order is said to have taken its name from a large round table at which the king and his knights sat for meals. Such a table is still preserved at Winchester as having belonged to King Arthur. Some accounts say that there were 150 seats at this table, and that it was originally constructed to imitate the shape of the round world (see note to l. 235, below) by the wizard Merlin for Uther Pendragon, Arthur's father; that Uther gave it to Leodegraunce, Guinevere's father, who presented it and 100 knights with it as a wedding gift to Arthur. One of the seats was called the *Siege* (*i.e.* seat) *Perilous*, because it swallowed up any unchaste person who happened to sit in it. Galahad The Pure was the only knight who could sit in it with safety. Other accounts say the Round Table was constructed in imitation of that used by Christ and His disciples at the Last Supper; that it contained thirteen seats, and that the seat originally occupied by Christ was always empty, unless it was occupied by the Holy Grail.

Other kings and princes besides Arthur had Round Tables. In the Reign of Edward I., Roger de Mortimer established a Round Table for the furtherance of warlike pastimes, and King Edward III. is said to have done the same. 'To hold a Round Table' came to mean little more than holding a tournament.

The objects which Arthur had in view in founding this order are well described in the Idyll of *Guinevere* in the lines beginning:—

"I made them lay their hands in mine and swear
To reverence the king, as if he were
Their conscience and their conscience as their king."

man by man, one after another.

4. **Lyonnesse,** a fabulous country contiguous to Cornwall, said to be now covered by the sea. There is still extant in the south-west counties of England a tradition to the effect that the Scilly Islands were once part of the mainland. The region is thus described in *The Passing of Arthur*, 82, 83:—

"A land of old upheaven from the abyss
By fire, to sink into the abyss again."

The name is sometimes written *Leonnoys*.

6. The bold Sir Bedivere. 'Bold' is what is called a 'permanent epithet,' since it is nearly always used along with the name of Bedivere. So, in Homer, Achilles is always 'swift-footed,' and in Virgil, Æneas is always 'pious,' and in Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, William of Deloraine is always 'good at need.' In *The Coming of Arthur* (175, 176) Bedivere's boldness shows itself specially in his defence of Arthur's right to the throne:—

"For bold in heart and act and word was he,
Whenever slander breathed against the King."

7. the last, the only survivor.

9. chancel, the eastern and most sacred portion of a church, formerly always separated from the main part of the building by a screen of lattice-work (Lat. *cancelli*, cross-bars).

Notice how the scenery typifies the condition of Arthur. His noble life and lofty purpose are in ruins like the broken chancel and cross: he lies on the narrow border-land between the ocean of Life and the great, vague 'water' of Eternity.

10. strait, a narrow tongue of land; the word is more usually applied to a narrow passage in the ocean.

12. a great water. Since the poet wishes to represent the general impression produced by the view from the chapel, he avoids all detail, and uses the vague words 'a water' instead of 'a lake.' The beholder would not at first sight notice whether it was a lake or a broad river; all he would be conscious of would be a spreading sheet of water of size and shape unknown; and the picture is presented to the reader just as it would first strike the eye of Sir Bedivere. Subsequently, where no such instantaneous impression is depicted, the words 'mere' and 'lake' are used. Cf. *Derwentwater*, *Gala Water*, etc.

14. The sequel, what follows as the result of this day's fight. unsolders, disunites, breaks into pieces. *Solder* (from the same root as *solid*) is a kind of metallic cement for uniting the surfaces of metals; it is often composed of zinc (or silver) and copper. It is sometimes spelt and pronounced *solder* or *sawder*.

15. fellowship, confederation, united band (of knights of the Round Table).

16. Whereof ... record, of all the fellowships of which, etc. such a sleep. The comparison of death to sleep is very common in Homer, Vergil, and other classical poets. Thus Homer, *Iliad*, xi. 241, has κοιμήσατο χάλκεον ὕπνον, 'he slept an iron sleep'; cf. Vergil, *Æneid*, x. 745, *ferreus urget somnus*, 'an iron sleep weighs down his eyes,' and Moschus's ἀτέρμονα νήγερτον ὕπνον, 'an endless sleep that knows no waking.' See also Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, lxviii. 2, "Sleep, death's twin brother," which echoes Homer's Ἕπνη ... κασιγνήτω θανάτῳ (*Iliad*, xiv. 231), and Vergil's

con-sanguineus Leti sopor (*Aeneid*, vi. 278). So in the Bible, *Acts*, vii (60), Stephen "fell on sleep," i.e. died. Cf. *cemetery*, literally 'sleeping-place.'

21. Camelot, the city where Arthur held his court, now identified with a village called *Queen Camel*, in Somersetshire, where remains of the vast entrenchments of an ancient town are still to be seen. The traditions of Queen Camel still preserve the name of Arthur; the bridge over the river Camel is called 'Arthur's Bridge,' and there is a spring in the neighbourhood called 'Arthur's Well.' A description of Arthur's mysterious hall at Camelot is given in the Idyll of *The Holy Grail* in the lines beginning—

"O brother, had you known our mighty hall,
Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago."

22. I perish ... made, my life, and with it all my noble purposes, is brought to ruin by those whom I was the first to form into one people. See *The Coming of Arthur*, 15-19:—

"But either failed to make the kingdom one.
And after these King Arthur for a space,
And through the puissance of his Table Round,
Drew all their petty principedoms under him,
Their king and head, and made a realm, and reigned."

23. Merlin, 'the great enchanter of the time,' the famous magician of the Arthurian legends. "According to Geoffrey of Monmouth (lib. vi. cc. 18, 19) Merlin had been court magician since the time of Vortigirn, who had caused him to be sought as the only one capable of relieving him out of the difficulty he had encountered in raising a castle on Salisbury Plain" (Note in Wright's *Malory*). Welsh traditions spell the name Mereddin and narrate that he was the Bard of Emrys Wledig, the Ambrosius of Saxon history, by whose command he built Stonehenge. "The true history of Merlin seems to be that he was born between the years 470 and 480, and during the invasion of the Saxon took the name of Ambrose, which preceded his name of Merlin, from the successful leader of the Britons, Ambrosius Aurelianus, who was his first chief and from whose service he passed into that of King Arthur, the southern leader of the Britons" (Morley, *English Writers*, i.). Merlin is represented in *Merlin and Vivien* as the son of a demon and also as "the great Enchanter of the Time," and again as

"the most famous man of all those times,
Merlin, who knew the range of all their arts,
Had built the King his havens, ships, and halls,
Was also Bard, and knew the starry heavens;
The people call'd him Wizard—"

His prophecy regarding Arthur's second coming is mentioned in *The Coming of Arthur*, 418-421 :—

“ And Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn,
Though men may wound him, that he will not die,
But pass, and come again.”

The Idyll of *Merlin and Vivien* gives an account of Merlin's fate. See also Matthew Arnold's *Tristram and Iseult*.

24. let what will be, be, whatever my future may be.

27. **Excalibur.** Arthur's magic sword. In Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, ii. 3, the Lady of the Lake who had given Arthur the sword says, “The name of it is Excalibur, that is as much as to say Cut-steel.” According to the English romance of *Merlin*, the sword bore the following inscription :—

“ Ich am y-hote Escalabore,
Unto a king a fair tresore” ;

and it is added :—

“ On Inglis is this writing,
Kerve steel and yren and al thing.”

In the French *Merlin* it is said that the name is a Hebrew word meaning ‘tres cher et acier fer,’ which is probably a printer's mis-correction of the true reading ‘trancher acier et fer,’ ‘to carve steel and iron.’ Roquefort says ‘Ce mot est tiré de l'Hebreu et veut dire tranchefer,’ ‘this word is taken from the Hebrew and means carve-iron.’ Cf. the name *Taillefer*, i.e. ‘Iron-cutter.’ Malory, iv. 9, says, “And then he (Arthur) deemed treason, that his sword was changed ; for his sword bit not steel as it was wont to do.” The sword and the way it came into Arthur's possession are described by Tennyson in *The Coming of Arthur*, 295-308. The name is also written *Escalibore* and *Caliburn*. Arthur's lance was called *Rone* and his shield *Pridwin*. Arthur had also a second-best sword, *Clarent* ; and in *Merlin*, ii. 9, he is described as capturing the Irish King Ryance's “excellent sword *Marandaise*.” *Gilvain* had a sword called *Galatine*.

The notion of enchanted armour is found in many old poets and romancers of all nations. In the *Mahabharata* the magic bow of Arjuna is described under the name *Gandiva*, and Mukta Phalaketu in the *Kathá Sarit Ságara* (chap. 115) is presented by Siva with a sword named *Invincible*.

The names of some of the most celebrated of these enchanted weapons are given below :—

Ali's	sword,	<i>Zulfikar.</i>
Cæsar's	„	<i>Crocea Mors.</i>
Charlemagne's	„	<i>La Joyeuse.</i>
Lancelot's	„	<i>Aroundight.</i>
Orlando's	„	<i>Durindana.</i>
Siegfried's	„	<i>Balmung.</i>
The Cid's	„	<i>Colada.</i>

A list of some thirty-five such weapons is given in Brewer's *Dict. of Phrase and Fable*, s.v. *Sword*. Cf. Longfellow's lines:—

“It is the sword of a good knight,
 Tho' homespun be his mail;
 What matter if it be not hight
Joyeuse, Colada, Durindale,
Excalibar, or Aroundight.”

Spenser (*Faery Queen*, ii. 8. 19) calls Arthur's sword *Morddure*.

31. *Clothed in white samite.* The recurrence of this line recalls the ‘permanent epithets’ noticed under l. 6. Such repetitions are frequent in Homer and Theocritus, and are found in Spenser and Milton. *Samite* is a rich silk stuff interwoven with gold or silver thread; derived from Gk. *hex*, six, and *mitos*, thread of the warp, literally ‘woven of six threads’; cf. *dimity*. Tennyson has ‘red samite’ and ‘blackest samite’ in *Lancelot and Elaine*, and ‘crimson samite’ in *The Holy Grail*.

34. *sung or told, celebrated in song or story.*

37. *fling him.* Arthur regards the magic sword as a person endowed with life and power of its own. *mere*, lake or pool; the word originally meant ‘that which is dead,’ hence a desert, waste, or stagnant pool; cf. Lat. *mare* and Skt. *maru*, a desert, from *mri*, to die; also French *mare* and English *marsh*.

38. *séest*, a dissyllable. *lightly, nimbly or quickly.* Malory's words are—“My lord, said Sir Bedevere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly (I will) bring you word again.” ‘Lightly’ in this sense is common in Spenser's *Faery Queen*.

43. *hest*, from O. E. *hæts*, command;—commonly written with the prefix, *behest*. The *t* is an added letter as in *whils-t*. Chaucer uses *hest*, “the second *hest* of God,” *Pardoner's Tale*, 185; Spenser, *Faery Queen*, i. 7. 18, has “holy *heasts*,” and the word is frequently used by Shakspeare, as in *The Tempest*, i. 2. 274; iii. 1. 37, etc.; it also occurs in *Pelleas and Etarre*, “acted her *hest*.” at full, to the utmost, thoroughly.

47. *mighty bones.* The bones of the Danish invaders heaped up in the church at Hythe are abnormally large-sized, and seem to show that “there were giants in those days.”

50. **By zig-zag... rocks.** The short, sharp vowel sounds and the numerous dental letters in this line, making it broken in rhythm and difficult to pronounce, are in fine contrast with the broad vowels and liquid letters which make the next line run smoothly and easily off the tongue. The sound in each line exactly echoes the sense; the crooked and broken path leads to the smooth and level shore.

51. **levels.** The plural is probably suggested by the Latin plural, *aequora*. Or the poet may be hinting that what looks, when seen from the high ground, "a great water," becomes a series of flashing surfaces to the eyes of a man standing on the shore. In *The Lover's Tale* Tennyson has "the rippling levels of the lake."

55. **keen with frost,** clear in the frosty air. Cf. "The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost," *In Memoriam*, lxxviii. 5.

57. **topaz-lights.** The topaz is a jewel of various colours, yellow, or green, or blue, or brown. Perhaps from Skt. *tapas*, fire. jacinth, another form of *hyacinth*, a precious stone of the colour of the hyacinth flower, blue and purple.

58. **subtlest,** most skilfully wrought, or in a most intricate pattern. Cf. *The Coming of Arthur*, 297-299.

60. **this way... mind.** This expression is an imitation of Vergil, *Aeneid*, viii. 20, *Atque animum nunc huc celerem, nunc dividit illuc*, 'And he divides his swift mind now this way, now that.' Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, i. 188, *ἐν δέ οἱ ἦτορ... διάνδιχα μερμήριζεν*, 'and his heart within hesitated between two (opinions).'

61. **In act to throw,** an expression much used by Pope in his translation of the *Iliad*. Cf. *Il.* iii. 349, *ἄρπυτο χαλκῷ*, which Pope renders—

["Atreides then] his massy lance prepares,
In act to throw."

63. **many-knotted water-flags,** reeds, with numerous joints and with long leaves, that wave like flags in the wind.

65. **So strode back slow.** These words are all accented, and the line thus becomes heavy and slow to pronounce; the rhythm thus echoes the heavy slow steps of Sir Bedivere.

70. 1. **washing in the reeds—lapping on the crag.** It has been remarked that these two phrases mark exactly "the difference of sound produced by water swelling up against a permeable or impermeable barrier." The water would splash softly through the reeds, but would make a sharper sound when striking against the impenetrable rock. Mr. Churton Collins (*Illustrations of Tennyson*) thinks that these two lines contain "two of the finest onomatopoeic effects in our language." *Lap* means, generally, to 'lick up with the tongue, as a dog drinks'; and hence, as here,

to 'make a sharp sound as a dog does when drinking.' Malory's words are, "I saw nothing but the waters wap (*i.e.* beat) and the waves wan (*i.e.* ebb)." [But in *Le Mort Arthur*, Bedivere answers that he sees, nothing

"But watres depe and wawes wanne."

May not the 'wap' in Malory be a printer's error for 'depe,' *i.e.*, 'deep'? If so, 'wan' is also an adjective, as in "wan wave," in *The Coming of Arthur*, 129, and "wan water" in *Gareth and Lynette*, 803.]

73. betray'd thy nature, been false to thy instinctive sense of honour and to thy title of knight. Malory says, "And thou art named a noble knight, and would betray me for the riches of the sword."

75. fealty, a doublet of *fidelity*.

80. As thou art lief and dear. Copied from Malory. *Lief* is from the same root as *love*, and means *beloved*. Shakspeare (2 *Henry VI.* i. 2. 28) has '*alder-liefest*,' dearest of all.

84. Counting... pebbles. In times of grave moment when the mind is absorbed in deep contemplation of some event of surpassing importance the senses often mechanically employ themselves in noticing trifling objects. Cf. *Maud*, ii. 2. 8-15:—

"Strange, that the mind, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye—
That it should, by being overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by!"

86. chased, engraved. *Chased* is a contraction of *enchased*; literally, *incased*, or 'enclosed in a case or cover'; hence, 'covered with engraved ornament.'

89. one worthy note, *i.e.* 'a thing worthy of note, a notable thing.'

90. Should thus be lost, ought (according to natural expectation) to be lost.

94. the bond of rule, the tie uniting the ruled to the ruler, the connecting link between a king and his subjects, which alone makes systematic government possible.

99. empty breath, unsubstantial, impalpable report. Bedivere is represented in *The Coming of Arthur* as a simple, honest knight who from the first accepts Arthur as an earthly king and does not trouble himself about the doubts and portents that heralded his coming. So here, with but a dim recognition of the

spiritual nature of the King's mission, he deems it all-important to preserve a material memorial of Arthur's life-work.

100. rumours of a doubt, vague traditions of a mythical person.

102. joust (also written *just*), a tournament or sham fight; literally, a 'coming close together, meeting,' from Lat. *juxta*, near, close.

104. maiden of the Lake. Malory thus describes Arthur's first meeting with this lady: "With that they saw a damsel going on the lake. What damsel is that? said Arthur. That is the Lady of the Lake, said Merlin; and within that lake is a rock, and therein is as fair a palace as any on earth, and richly beseen." The Lady of the Lake is in some of the romances identified with Vivien. Lancelot is called 'Lancelot of the Lake' from his having been educated at this lady's court; see the Idyll of *Lancelot and Elaine*, where the Lady is said to have stolen Lancelot from his mother's arms. In the Idylls the Lady of the Lake is represented as typifying Religion. See *The Coming of Arthur*, 282-293, and *Gareth and Lynette*, 210-219.

108. winning reverence, gaining respectful admiration from his hearers for this romantic story.

109. now ... were lost, would be lost if I were to throw the sword away.

110. clouded with his own conceit, his power of clearly distinguishing right from wrong being obscured by his own false notion. Conceit, conception, notion.

112. And so strode etc. The frequent repetition of single lines should be noticed; it is Homeric.

113. Spoke. Varied from *spake*, above, to prevent monotony. So also Tennyson uses both *sung* and *sang*, *brake* and *broke*.

119. miserable, mean, base.

121. Authority ... will. When the commanding look that inspires awe and obedience passes from the eye of a king, he loses therewith his authority over his subjects. A critic has remarked that this personification (of authority) is "thoroughly Shakespearean; it assists the imagination without distressing the understanding, as when dwelt on and expanded in detail; deepening the impression of the sentiment by giving along with a true thought a grand picture" (Brimley's *Essays*). Cf. Queen Elizabeth's words to Cecil: "*Must*," she exclaimed, "is *must* a word to be addressed to princes? Little man, little man, thy father, if he had been alive, durst not have used that word, but thou hast grown presumptuous, because thou knowest that I shall die" (Lingard, *Hist. of England*, vi. 316). Cf. also *Queen Mary*, v. 5:—

"The Queen is dying or you dare not say it."

122. *laid widow'd*, helplessly bereft. Tennyson uses this bold metaphorical word again in his *In Memoriam*, xvii. 20, "my widow'd race," and lxxxv. 113, "My heart, though widow'd, may not rest," in *Aylmer's Field*, 720, "widow'd walls," and in *Queen Mary*, i. 5, "widow'd channel."

125. *offices, services, duty*; cf. Lat. *officium*.

128. *giddy*, frivolous, transient.

130. *prosper*, do his duty.

132. *with my hands*. Perhaps because he had now no sword; or, more probably, these words are introduced in imitation of Homer's habit of mentioning specific details: cf. *ποσσιν ἤε μακρὰ βῆσας*, 'he went taking long steps with his feet.' Cf. Bible, *Psalms*, xliv. 1: "We have heard with our ears"; and *The Talking Oak*, 82: "Hear me with thine ears." Notice the touch of human personality in the king's sharp anger; otherwise Arthur is generally represented by Tennyson as a rather colourless being, and as almost "too good for human nature's daily food." Guinevere in *Lancelot and Elaine*, 121, 122, calls him

" the faultless king,
That passionate perfection."

133. *Then quickly rose etc.* "Every word tells of rapid, agitated, determined action, refusing to dally with temptation" (Brimley).

136. *wheel'd*, swung it round over his head.

137. *Made lightnings*, made a succession of brilliant flashes.

138. *And flashing ... in an arch*. "A splendid instance of sound answering to sense, which the older critics made so much of; the additional syllable (in the last foot, *in an arch*) which breaks the measure and necessitates an increased rapidity of utterance, seeming to express to the ear the rush of the sword up its parabolic curve" (Brimley).

139. *streamer of the northern morn*, tongue of light of the *Aurora Borealis*, of which 'northern morn' is a translation. Cf. *The Talking Oak*, 275-276:—

"The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up in silver spikes!"

and Scott, *Lady of the Lake*, iv. 9:—

"Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north."

For similar instances of Tennyson's literal translations of classical expressions, see *Demeter*, 96, note.

140. *moving isles of winter*, floating icebergs. Observe how the poet in three lines presents a complete picture of one of nature's grandest phenomena, thus introducing a most vivid

simile without interrupting the flow of the narrative. Notice the compression of style. shock, collide.

143. dipt, went below. *To dip* generally means 'to put under the surface'; here 'to go under.'

148. drawing thicker breath, breathing more heavily as being nearer death.

149. Now see I by thine eyes. Arthur had no need now to ask of Bedivere if he had obeyed the command; the expression of the knight's eyes told enough. The sudden exclamation is very dramatic.

155. three lives of mortal men. Homer (*Odys.* iii. 245) says of Nestor that he had been king during three generations of men. In later times Nestor was called *τριγέρων*.

166. my wound .. cold. Malory's words are, "Alas, the wound in your head hath caught much cold."

167, 168. half rose, Slowly, with pain. The two long syllables at the end of one line, and the pauses after the first and second feet of the next line, admirably represent the slow and interrupted effort of the wounded king to rise.

169. wistfully, with eager longing. *Wistful* is probably a misspelling of *wishful*, from the mistaken idea that it was connected with O. E. *wis*, know.

170. As in a picture, as the eyes of a painted portrait often have a fixed and expectant gaze. Cf. *Æschylus, Agamemnon*, 240, *ὡς ἐν γράφῃς*, '[She (Iphigenia) cast at each of those who sacrificed a piteous glance, standing out clear] as in a picture'; and *The Day-Dream*, i. 3:—

"Like a picture seemeth all."

177. nightmare. A fiend or witch, supposed to cause evil dreams. Skelton has "Medusa, that mare" (*i.e.* that hag).

182. Clothed with his breath, enveloped as by a cloak in a mist caused by his own damp breath clinging round him in the frosty air.

183. Larger than human. Cf. the Idyll of *Guinevere*, 595-597:—

"The moony vapour rolling round the king,
Who seemed the phantom of a giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold."

Cf. also *A Dream of Fair Women*, 87, and note; *The Princess*, vii. 33; *Pelleas and Etarre*, 448, 449.

185. like a goad. The remorse he felt for his disobedience, and the fear that the king might suddenly die, urged him on as a goad urges oxen.

186. harness, originally, as here, body-armour: from the same

root as *iron*. Cf. Bible, *1 Kings*, xx. 11: "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."

188. *bare black cliff clang'd*. Observe the alliteration and the number of accented monosyllables succeeding each other, thus representing the successive reverberations of sound. Wordsworth (*Skating*, 39-42) has a passage equally full of sound:—

"With the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud,
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron."

based, planted; the word is generally used in a metaphorical sense.

190. *dint of armed heels*, the tread of iron-shod heels. Pronounce *arméd*.

193. *hove*, was lying. Malory (xxi. 5) writes, "And when they were at the water-side even fast by the bank hove a little barge." Cf. iv. 28, "where hove the two brethren abiding him," and xviii. 10, "as he hove in a little leaved wood." M. E. *houen*, *hoven*, to abide, of which *hover* is a frequentative form. Spenser, *Faery Queen*, iii. 10, 20, has "Which hove close under a forest side."

195. *ware*, aware; cf. Bible, *Acts*, xiv. 6: "They were ware of it."

196. *dense*, thickly crowded.

197. *Black-stoled*. The *stole* was a long loose robe reaching to the feet. Cf. "In stoles of white" (*Sir Galahad*, 43). With this description contrast that of the ship in *The Coming of Arthur*, 374, 375:—

"And all from stem to stern
Bright with a shining people on the decks."

like a dream. As unearthly and indistinct as images seen in a dream. *by these*, near to them (were).

198. *Three Queens*. These three queens are mentioned in *The Coming of Arthur*, 275-278:—

"Three fair Queens,
Who stood in silence near his throne, the friends
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright
Sweet faces, who will help him at his need."

Malory says, "One was King Arthur's sister, Queen Morgan le Fay; the other was the Queen of Northgales; the third was the Queen of the Waste Lands." The three queens are perhaps intended to typify the three great Christian virtues, Faith, Hope, Charity, who help the soul in its battle against evil.

199. *shiver'd to the tingling stars*, thrilled as it mounted through the air and reached the stars that trembled in response. Cf. *The May Queen*, 136:—

"Then seemed to go right up to heaven and die among the stars," and *Cenone*, 215:—

"Between the loud stream and the trembling stars."

In reply to the objection that this line "has a touch of exaggeration which belongs to the 'spasmodic' school," Mr. Brimley remarks, "But the cry comes from a company of spirits amid mountains whose natural power of echo is heightened by the silence of night, the clearness of the winter air, and the hardening effects of frost. Such a cry, at such a time, and in such a place, would thrill from rock to rock, from summit to summit, till it seemed to pierce the sky in a hurthling storm of multitudinous arrow sounds, and die away in infinitely distant pulsations among the stars."

202. *where no one comes.* "The mournfulness of the feeling a man would experience in such a place, from the sense of utter isolation and sterility, is blended with the naturally sad wail of the wind over a wide waste, and the addition thus becomes no mere completion of a thought of which only part is wanted for illustration . . . but gives a heightening of sentiment without which the illustration would be incomplete and less impressive" (Brimley). Compare Keats's—

"Undescribed sounds

That come a-swooning over hollow grounds

And wither wearily on barren moors."—285-287.

207, 208. *rose the tallest . . . fairest, rose above the others in height as she stood.* Malory says, "Morgan le Fay . . . that was as fair a lady as any might be."

210. *complaining, lamenting.* Cf. *The Lady of Shalott*, 120:
"The broad stream in his banks complaining."

213. *like the wither'd moon, like the moon when its light is fading before the early beams of the rising sun.* Cf. *Fatima*:—

"Faints like a dazzled morning moon."

Also Shelley, *Ode to the Skylark*, 13-16:—

"Keen as are the arrows Of that silver sphere

Whose intense lamp narrows In the white dawn clear."

215. *greaves, armour for the lower part of the legs. cuisses, armour for the thighs; Lat. coxa, thigh. dash'd with drops of onset, splashed with drops of blood from the encounter.* Cf. *The Princess*, v. 157, 158:—

"Though dashed with death,

He reddens what he kisses."

"Onset" is a very generic term, poetic because removed from all vulgar associations of common parlance, and vaguely suggestive not only of war's pomp and circumstance, but of high deeds also and heroic arts, since onset belongs to mettle and

daring; the word, for vast and shadowy connotation, is akin to Milton's grand abstraction, 'Far off *his coming* shone,' or Shelley's 'Where the earthquake demon taught her young ruin' (Rodon Noel in *The Contemporary Review*). Cf. *Ænone*, 184, "I shut my sight," and *A Dream of Fair Women*, 115, "The bright death quiver'd at the victim's throat," and *The Last Tournament*, 511:—

"Belted his body with her *white embrace*."

216. **light and lustrous**, fair in colour and shining. Arthur is described in *The Coming of Arthur*, 329, 330, as "fair Beyond the race of Britons and of men."

217. **like a rising sun**. The fair bright locks are compared to the rays surrounding the disc of the rising sun. Cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, iii. 625-627:—

"Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders."

Arthur is thus described in *The Last Tournament*, 660-663:—

"That victor of the Pagan throned in hall,
His hair, a sun that rayed from off a brow
Like hill-snow high in heaven, the steel-blue eyes,
The golden beard that clothed his lips with light."

Cf. *Tithonus*, 54:—

"Thy dim curls kindle into sunny rings."

In *Maud* we have "her sunny hair" and "her head sunning over with curls," and see *Ænone*, 58, and note.

218. **High from the dais-throne**, as he sat on the throne elevated on the dais or platform. *Dais* is from the same root as *disc*, and meant originally a quoit, then a round platter, then a "high table" or throne, and finally the raised platform on which a high table or a throne stands.

224. **Shot thro' the lists**, as a brilliant meteor glances across the sky.

228. **my forehead and mine eyes**. This definite specification of separate items, instead of using the general term 'face,' is true to the Homeric pattern; see l. 132.

232, 233. **the light ... myrrh**. Arthur is compared with the star in the East which appeared at Christ's birth to the Magi, or Wise Men, and led them to Bethlehem, where they presented to the new-born Child offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. See Bible, *Matthew*, ii. 11.

235. **image of the mighty world**. "Also Merlin made the Round Table in tokening of the roundness of the world, for by the Round Table is the world signified by right. For all the world,

Christian and heathen, repair unto the Round Table, and when they are chosen to be of the fellowship of the Round Table, they think them more blessed and more in worship than if they had gotten half the world" (Malory). The belief that the world was in form round and flat, like the top of a round table, prevailed even after the globe had been circumnavigated. Cf. *Columbus*, 58, 59:—

"for at last their Highnesses

Were half-assured this earth might be a sphere."

236. *companionless*. Malory's words are, "Ah, my Lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me and leave me here alone among mine enemies?"

237. *the days darken*, the future seems dark and dreary.

238. *other minds*, unsympathetic minds, different from those I have known.

240. *The old ... to new*, a line often quoted. It occurs also in *The Coming of Arthur*, 508, when the king is described as refusing to give tribute to Rome, on the ground that "the slowly fading mistress of the world" had had her day, and must give place to a new and stronger power. Cf. *In Memoriam*, Prologue, 17, 18:—

"Our little systems have their day,

They have their day and cease to be."

241. *God ... ways*, God has many methods of accomplishing on earth His purposes, which are part of His nature, and often lays aside the methods He has been using to replace them by others.

242. *Lest one ... world*, lest men's hearts, relying too much upon old established usage, should stagnate and grow slothful for want of change, and thus a lifeless formalism should take the place of active belief and vigorous endeavour.

Cf. R. Browning, *James Lee's Wife*:—

"Rejoice that man is hurled

From change to change unceasingly,

His soul's wings never furled."

243. *Comfort thyself etc.* Malory's words are, "Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust to trust in. For I will unto the vale of Avilion to heal me of my grievous wound; and if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul."

244, 245. *that which ... pure*, may God accept my work and, absorbing it, as it were, into Himself, purify it of all its unworthy elements. Cf. *In Memoriam*, cxxxi. 4, "Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure."

249. *like a fountain*. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 799:—

"Prayer ...

Like fountains of sweet water in the sea."

251. That nourish... brain, whose brute³ nature is blind to anything outside or above what they can estimate by instinct or material sense. Cf. Shaks. *Ant. and Cleop.* iv. 8. 21:—

“A brain that nourishes our nerves.”

254. every way, on all sides.

255. Bound by gold chains. Cf. *Harold*, iii. 2:—

“prayer,
A breath that fleets beyond this iron world
And touches him that made it.”

The notion of the earth being attached to heaven by a golden chain perhaps originated in the passage in Homer's *Iliad*, viii. 19-30; cf. Plato, *Theæt.* 153. Frequent allusions to this supposition are to be found scattered throughout English literature. Thus Bacon in his *Advancement of Learning*, I. i. says, “According to the allegory of the poets the highest link of nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair”: cf. *Adv. of L.* II. vi. Jeremy Taylor writes, “Faith is the golden chain to link the penitent sinner to God.” Cf. also “This is the golden chain of love, whereby the whole creation is bound to the throne of the Creator” (Hare); and

“She held a great gold chaine ylincked well,
Whose upper end to highest heaven was knitt.”
—Spenser, *F. Q.* ii. 7. 46.

“hanging in a golden chain
This pendent world.”—Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii. 1051, 1052.

“For, letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky.”
—Dryden, *Character of a Good Parson*, 19, 20.

259. island-valley of Avilion. Avilion, or, as it is otherwise spelt Avelion, or Avalon (“dozing in the Vale of Avalon,” *The Palace of Art*, 167), is supposed to have been the name of a valley in the neighbourhood of Glastonbury, the town in Somersetshire where Joseph of Arimathea is said to have first landed from his boat with the Holy Grail. [See the Idyll of *The Holy Grail*.] Avilion is called an island as being nearly surrounded by the “river's embracement.” Cf. Drayton, *Polyolbion*, iii. :—

“O three-times famous isle ! where is the place that might
Be with thyself compared for glory and delight
Whilst Glastonbury stood ?”

Some romances, however, make it an ocean island “not far on this side of the terrestrial Paradise,” and represent it as the abode of Arthur and Morgan Le Fay. Compare with these myths the accounts of the “Islands of the Blest,” the “Fortunate Islands” of Greek and Roman legends, whither the

favourites of the Gods were conveyed without dying (see *Ulysses*, l. 63); also the tales of the "Flying Island of St. Brandan." Many legends tell of various enchanted islands, and the names of a number of them may be found in the *Voyage of Maeldune*.

260, 261. *Where falls ... loudly.* Cf. the description of the abode of the Gods in *Lucretius*; also the accounts of Elysium in Homer, *Odys.* iv. 566, and Lucretius, *De Rerum Nat.* iii. 20, and Bion, iii. 16; and of Olympus in Homer, *Odys.* vi. 42-45.

262. *Deep-meadow'd*, a translation of the Greek βαθύλειμος, 'with rich fertile meadows,' Homer, *Iliad*, ix. 151. *happy.* Cf. Vergil, *Georg.* i. 1, *lætæ segetes*, 'happy (i.e. plenteous) harvest.' *orchard lawns*, grassy plots with fruit trees growing on them. ('Avilion' is said to mean 'Isle of Apples,' from the Breton *aval*, apple.)

263. *crowned with summer sea*, ringed round with stormless waves as with a coronet. Cf. Homer, *Odys.* x. 195, *περὶ νῆσον πόντος ἑστειράνεται*, 'round the island the sea lies like a crown.' The surrounding sea is elsewhere (*Maud*, iv. 6) called by Tennyson,

"The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land."

Cf. Sir J. Davies, *Orchestra*, 337, 338 :—

"The sea that fleets about the land,
And like a girdle clips her solid waist."

With "summer sea" compare Wordsworth, *Skating* :—

"And all was tranquil as a summer sea."

267 *ere her death.* The tradition that the swan previously to her death sings a sweet song is one of long standing. See *The Dying Swan*; also Shaks., *Othello*, v. 2, 247, "I will play the swan and die in music," and many other passages. Mr. Nicol says of the *Cygnus Musicus*, "Its note resembles the tones of a violin, though somewhat higher. Each note occurs after a long interval. The music presages a thaw in Iceland, and hence one of its greatest charms."

268. *Ruffles her pure cold plume*, unfolds her white clear wing-feathers. *takes the flood*, strikes the water.

269. *swarthy webs*, alluding to the dark colour of the swan's webbed feet.

270. *Revolving many memories.* Cf. the Latin *multa animo revolvens*, 'revolving many things in his mind.'

271. *one black dot ... dawn*, a single speck of black on the bright horizon where the day was dawning. The dawn of the first day of a new year typifies the rise of the new era which was to succeed that of Arthur: from this point

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new."

SIR GALAHAD.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS poem was first published in 1842.

Along with *Sir Galahad* should be read *St. Simeon Stylites* and *St. Agnes' Eve*. The three poems belong to the "quasi-dramatic" group of Tennyson's poems, which aim at presenting a type of character and not a narrative of action. The speaker in each case gives utterance to his or her own thoughts and aspirations, and thus a dramatic vividness is worked into the thoughts and style. Further, these three poems give from three different points of view, pictures of the monastic ideal of life, of the religious enthusiasm of mediæval Christianity. *St. Simeon Stylites* paints this ideal from its harsh and repellant side, showing the spiritual pride that apes humility and the self-conscious superiority to the ordinary life of mankind which marked the religious mystic of the Middle Ages. *St. Agnes' Eve* and *Sir Galahad* present the beautiful side of Christian mysticism. The former poem puts into the mouth of a woman the raptures and ecstasy of a pure spirit yearning for the Beatific Vision and for closer communion with God. *Sir Galahad* is the ideal saint-knight of Christian chivalry. He is no mere contemplative mystic: he rides abroad "redressing human wrongs," but he is possessed by the spirit of "other-worldliness": a "maiden knight," he embraces the mediæval doctrine of the peculiar sanctity of virginity: and in his solitary raptures, his musings over the vague "pure spaces clothed in living beams," in his self-conscious recognition of his own saintliness, we see the mysticism which Tennyson has in *The Holy Grail* so definitely blamed as one of the causes of the breaking up of the Round Table.

Sir Galahad, the son of Lancelot and Elaine, is the purest of all King Arthur's knights. He wandered forth with the rest in the quest of Sangreall, in which he alone was successful. He then prayed for death, and "a great multitude of angels beare his soule up to heaven." See Introduction to *Morte d'Arthur*.

NOTES.

1. *carves the casques*, cuts through the helmets. *Casque* is from the Spanish *casco*, and is a doublet of *cash*.

3. *ten* in English (as in Greek and Latin) is often used of an indefinitely considerable number. Cf. "Fierce as ten furies" (Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii. 671); "Obstinacy as of ten mules" (Carlyle).

4. **Because my heart is pure.** Cf. the noble passage in Charles Kingsley's *The Roman and the Teuton*, Lect. iii. *ad fin.* : "But it had given him more, that purity of his; it had given him, as it may give you, gentlemen, a calm and steady brain, and a free and loyal heart; the energy which springs from health; the self-respect which comes from self-restraint; and the spirit which shrinks from neither God nor man, and feels it light to die for wife and child, for people, and for Queen."

5. **shattering.** The epithet expresses the succession of blasts that rend the air with their din. **shrilleth**, makes a shrill noise; cf. *The Passing of Arthur*, 41, 42 :—

"From cloud to cloud down the long wind the dream
Shrill'd."

Also *ib.* 34; and *Demeter*, 60, and note. **high**, loudly.

6. **The hard ... steel**, *i.e.* the swords break against the armour with which they come in contact. **brand** (from Old Eng. *byrnan*, to burn) is (1) a burning; (2) a fire-brand; (3) a sword, from its brightness.

7. **fly**, *i.e.* fly asunder, break up into fragments.

9. **lists**, ground enclosed for a tournament. The *t* has been appended, as in *whils-t amongs-t*. From old Fr. *lissee*, *lice*, a tilt-yard; low Lat. *liciae*, barriers; probably connected with Lat. *licium*, a thread. **clanging** expresses the ringing, metallic noises of the fight. Malory (*Morte d'Arthur*, Book xiii.), narrates some of Sir Galahad's deeds of arms.

11. **Perfume**, etc. Ladies sat in galleries overlooking the lists, and scattered flowers, etc., upon the successful combatants. For a description of a tournament, see Scott's *Ivanhoe*, chap. vii. viii. ix.

14. **On whom**, on those upon whom.

15. **For them**, etc., it was the office of the true knight to rescue distressed damsels. Thus Sir Galahad delivered the Castle of the Maidens and its inmates from the seven wicked knights (Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, chap. xliii.).

17. **all my ... above**, my desires are fixed upon heavenly objects, not upon woman's love.

18. **crypt**, underground cell or chapel : Gk. *κρύπτειν*, to hide.

21. **More ... beam**. Grandeur and more satisfying visions than the sweet looks of ladies shine upon me. See the next three stanzas.

22. **mightier**, *i.e.* than those of love.

23. **fair**, clear of guilt, blameless.

24. **virgin**, pure, stainless. **in work and will**, in action and in thought.

25. **when ... goes**, when the crescent moon sets amid storm-clouds.

28. noise, used here of *musical* sound, as in *A Dream of Fair Women*, 178.

31. stalls, seats in the chancel of a church or chapel, for the clergy.

34. vessels, the Eucharistic vessels containing the bread and the wine.

35. the shrill bell, the bell rung at the elevation of the Host during the celebration of the Mass. At a certain point in the service the officiating priest lifts the consecrated wafer for the adoration of the people.

38. a magic bark, such as that described in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, ii. 6. 5, which

"Away did slide,

Withouten oare or pilot it to guide."

Similar enchanted boats are mentioned by Ariosto and Tasso.

42. the holy Grail. See Introduction to *Morte d'Arthur*.

43. With folded feet, with feet folded across each other, with crossed feet. stoles, long robes.

44. On sleeping ... sail, they glide through the air on motionless wings.

46. My spirit ... bars, my spirit, eager to follow the heavenly vision, struggles against its corporeal prison, as a bird beats the bars of its cage with its wings in its efforts to escape. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 268, 269 :—

"Like a caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away."

As down ... slides, as the glorious vision glides away into the darkness.

52. dumb. The soft carpet of snow dulls the sound of his charger's hoofs.

53. the leads, i.e. the roofs of the houses, which were covered with lead. Upon these the tempest of hail beats with a crackling noise.

55. a glory, a divine radiance.

59. blessed forms, angelic shapes.

61. A maiden knight, Joseph of Arimathea (see note to l. 79) told Sir Galahad that he was sent to him because "thou hast been a cleane maiden as I am."

63. to breathe, etc., to leave Earth and go to Heaven.

65, 66. joy ... beams, the joys of Heaven, and its glorious regions.

67. Pure lilies. The lily in Christian art is an emblem of chastity, innocence, and purity. It often figures in pictures of

the Annunciation (*i.e.* the announcement made by Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of the Messiah), in which the angel is represented as carrying a lily-branch.

69. *And, stricken*, etc. Heavenly influences have such power with me that my whole being seems at times to become etherealised. Compare Wordsworth's (*Tintern Abbey*, 41-46) description of Nature's influences :—

“ That serene and blessed mood
In which ... we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul.”

73. *The clouds are broken*, etc. Cf. *St. Agnes' Eve*, 27 :—

“ All heaven bursts her starry floors.”

76. *shakes*, vibrates, pulsates.

77. *Then move ... nod*. So Milton (*Lycidas*, 42-44) represents the “ willows ” and the “ hazel copses ” as no more

“ Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.”

Cf. also Vergil, *Ecl.* vi. 28, where, when Silenus sings, you might see the tree-tops move (*rigidas motare cacumina quercus*).

78. *Wings*, *i.e.* of angels.

79. ‘ O just ... near.’ Cf. Bible, *Matt.* xxv. 21, “ Well done, good and faithful servant : ... enter thou into the joy of thy lord ”; *Rev.* ii. 10, “ Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.” The “ prize ” is the Holy Grail. Just before his death Sir Galahad sees the holy vessel with Joseph of Arimathea, who calls to him, “ Come forth, the servant of Jesu Christ, and thou shalt see that which thou hast much desired to see ” (*Morte d'Arthur*, xvii. c. 22).

81. *hostel*, inn ; *grange*, farmhouse, a common Lincolnshire word : originally a barn, from Low Lat. *granea*, which is from *granum*, corn.

THE VOYAGE.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS poem was first published in the *Enoch Arden* volume in 1864. It is included in Palgrave's *Lyrical Poems by Lord Tennyson* ; the compiler prefixes to the poem the following brief explanation of its scope “ Life as Energy, in the great ethical sense of the word—Life as the pursuit of the Ideal—is figured in this brilliantly-descriptive allegory.”

The failure of this finite world to satisfy the wants of the in-

finite spirit in man is often dwelt upon by Tennyson, as in *The Two Voices* :

“ The type of Perfect in the mind
In nature no where can he find.”

This sense of dissatisfaction arouses in man, as Bacon says in his *Advancement of Learning*, aspirations after “a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, a more absolute variety than can be found in the nature of things.” In the same place Bacon tells us that the use of Poetry is “to give some satisfaction to the mind of man on those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world in proportion being inferior to the soul.”

And in many ages, from the time of Plato with his ideal Republic to that of More and his Utopia, attempts have been made to satisfy the desire of man for a more perfect life by imaginary pictures of a society free from the evils prevalent in the actual world: so men have imagined the existence of enchanted islands like Atalantis or mystic golden Eldorados, which Tennyson in one of his earliest poems (*Timbuctoo*) calls

“ Shadows to which despite all shocks of change,
All onset of capricious incident,
Man clung with yearning hope which would not die.”

In *The Voyage* Tennyson pictures life devoted to the pursuit of this ideal excellence as a never-ending voyage, in which the ship is propelled by some mysterious impulse in quest of a fair, fleeting Vision which varies its shape from time to time, but does not cease to exercise a continuous attraction over its pursuers.

It is only by the setting up some lofty, some apparently impracticable ideal, and energetically striving to attain it, that practical progress is achieved. The vows by which King Arthur bound his knighthood may seem to the gross mind, as to Tristram in *The Last Tournament*, “to be the madness of an hour,” but

“ They served their use, their time ; for every knight
Believed himself a greater than himself,
And every follower eyed him like a God
Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,
Did mightier deeds than elsewhere he had done
And so the realm was made.”

The desire of Ulysses

“ To follow knowledge like a sinking star
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought ”

is only another form of this craving for continual advance towards an ideal. And it is of this divine impulse that Tennyson speaks in his poem (*Timbuctoo*) quoted above :—

"There is no mightier spirit than I to sway
The heart of man : and teach him to attain
By shadowing forth the unattainable"—

and again, in one of the poet's latest songs (*Merlin and the Gleam*), this is the mystic light which the dying Merlin urges the young Mariner to follow, "ere it vanishes

Over the margin
After it, follow it,
Follow the gleam."

NOTES.

1. **painted.** Buoys are generally painted red or some other vivid colour, so as to be conspicuous objects.

7. **We knew** etc. Just as, since the earth is a globe, there is no physical limit to a voyage round and round it, so we knew that however vigorous may be human effort to attain the Ideal, and whatever progress towards it may be made, it will never actually be reached: there will always be left something for the mind to strive after.

10. **Dry sang the tackle,** the wind whistled with a shrill sound through the tense cordage of the masts.

11. **The Lady's-head** etc., the carved figure-head on the bows of the ship. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 539:—

"her full-busted figure-head
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her bows."

And Longfellow, *Building of the Ship*:

"And at the bows an image stood:

It was not shaped in classic mould
Nor like a Nymph or Goddess of old
Or Naiad, rising from the water,
But modelled from the Master's daughter."

12. **Caught the shrill salt** etc. The hissing, briny spray struck against the figure-head as it cut through the opposing wind.

13. **broad sea swell'd,** the huge waves seemed to rise towards the keel as we rode over them.

14. **the run,** the ship's progress.

16. **to sail into the Sun.** Our course was eastwards, and the sun, rising above the horizon, seemed like a new region into which we were sailing.

18. **threshold of the night,** the western horizon: the expression occurs also in *In Memoriam*, xxix. 6. So in *The Dream of Fair Women*, 63, the eastern horizon is called "the threshold of the sun."

19. **Ocean-lane of fire**, the flaming track or line of light made by the setting sun across the waves: cf. *The Golden Year*, 50: "like a lane of beams athwart the sea," and *Enoch Arden*, 131: "the fiery highway of the sun."

20. **pillar'd light**, vertical rays of light thrown upward by the sun after his disappearance below the horizon: cf. *Ode to Memory*, 53: "a pillar of white light upon the wall."

21. **How oft**, understand "we saw." **purple-skirted** etc. Cf. *Locksley Hall*, 122: "Pilots of the purple twilight."

22. **slowly downward drawn**. Cf. Collins, *Ode to Evening*, 38-40:—

"O'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil."

23. **the slumber of the globe**, the night, when all Nature is sleeping.

27. **They climb'd as quickly**, they seemed to rise to the zenith with the same suddenness with which they had burst upon our sight. **rim**, horizon of waters.

29. **naked**, in clear outline, undimmed by cloud.

30. **houseless**, bare of covert: cf. *In Memoriam*, xxv. 9:—

"The moanings of the homeless sea."

31. **the silver boss** etc., shining bright through a surrounding halo, like a silver boss in the centre of a dark-coloured shield. **Boss**, from the same root as *beat*, is, literally, a 'knob or protuberance'; it is generally used of the large central protuberance of a shield, Lat. *umbo*.

32. **halo**, from Gk. *άλως*, a round threshing floor, in which the oxen trod out a circular path, is a luminous ring often seen around the moon.

33. **peaky islet**. Cf. *The Palace of Art*, 113, "hills with peaky tops engrailed." **shifted shapes**, seemed to continually change its shape as we looked at it from different points of view.

37. **deep**, far.

38. **drove**, sped: *drive* is often thus intransitively used of the motion of a ship before the wind.

40. **nutmeg rocks** etc. The islands of the Eastern Archipelago, e.g. the Moluccas (or "Spice Islands"), the Philippines, etc. abound in spice-bearing trees. The nutmeg and the clove are both indigenous in the Moluccas, where they are extensively cultivated.

41. **peaks that flamed** etc., volcanoes that shot forth flame, or showers of ashes unbrightened by flame, which threw a dark shade over the flat shore etc.

42. Gloom'd, obscured ; for *gloom* as a transitive verb, see *The Letters*, 2,

“ A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,”
and *Merlin and Vivien*, 174, “ which lately gloom'd Your fancy ” quivering brine, the sea trembling, as it were, under the lashing of the showers of ashes.

43. ashy rains, showers of ashes from volcanoes which spread out above into strange shapes resembling plumes of feathers or black pine trees. This effect is sometimes produced by the smoke arising from Vesuvius ; see Pliny's letter describing the destruction of Pompeii.

45. steaming flats, low lands, exhaling vapours. floods Of mighty mouth, rivers with broad estuaries.

47. scarlet-mingled, with their dark foliage variegated with red blossoms.

51. At times etc., sometimes the whole surface of the sea burned with phosphorescent light, sometimes the luminous glow would be visible only in the track our ship had made on the dark waters. This phosphorescence is common in tropical waters and is caused by numerous animalculæ, which, especially when disturbed by a passing ship, emit flashes of brilliant light.

52. wakes, *wake*, originally ‘a passage cut for a ship in a frozen lake or sea,’ is now used of the track of a ship as visible in the water behind it : the word is from the root *wag*, wet.

53. At times etc. In the neighbourhood of the South Sea Islands ships are often hailed by naked islanders in canoes ornamented with elaborate carving, who wish to barter fruits, etc.

56. But we nor paused etc. The mind is not to be diverted from its pursuit after the Truth by any temptations of the material world.

57. one fair Vision, *i.e.* the Ideal they were striving to reach.

65. And now etc. This stanza describes the different shapes which the Ideal takes in men's minds ; at times men entirely lose any definite conception of what is the *summum bonum* which they would fain realise : at times they see it as a beautiful but vague phantom indistinctly outlined by the imagination : again, man's highest felicity will appear to some in the more definite and practical shape of steadfast Virtue or attractive Knowledge : while others behold it in the guise of Hope of a Hereafter, beyond the reach of the storms of life ; or, again, as the political and social freedom and equality of all mankind.

69. idly, vainly, as powerless to harm the mystic figure.

71. the bloodless point reversed, with its point unstained by blood and turned downwards, in token that it had not been and

was not to be used. The freedom held out by the Vision is one to be gained not by sudden revolution or violent war, but by gradual and peaceful progress. Cf. *The Poet*, 41, of Freedom:—

“There was no blood upon her maiden robes,”

and *ib.* 53:—

“No sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl’d.”

73. *And only one* etc. There will always be some minds of a prosaic and material habit, who are content not to look beyond the world as they find it, and who sneer at any lofty thought or striving after perfection as unpractical folly.

81. *And never* etc. The life that is devoted to the pursuit of ideal truth does not allow its efforts to be checked by the ordinary obstacles that bar man’s efforts.

83. *We lov’d* etc. The idealist can appreciate all the beauty that there is to be found in the world around him, but refuses to be limited in his speculations by the laws which regulate actual progress in practical life.

85. *For blasts* etc. In the actual world advance is fitfully promoted or delayed by casual causes that make for or against it; but the progress of thought in the mind of the idealist is independent of his surroundings and is steadily urged by its own energy towards attainment, whatever be the opposition met with from without.

87. *whirlwind’s heart of peace*. At the centre of a cyclonic storm, round which the wind revolves, is a dead calm.

88. *the counter gale*, the wind blowing from a direction opposite to its first course. The winds at two opposite points on the circumference of a cyclone blow from diametrically opposite quarters: thus a ship, having passed through the centre, before emerging from such a storm meets with a gale ‘counter’ to that met with on entering the storm.

91-4. *Now mate...before*. No failure of their fellows to realise, or of themselves to attain the ideal truth can discourage the aspirants.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE.

(IN ENNA.)

INTRODUCTION.

THIS splendid descriptive poem was published in 1889, in a volume entitled “Demeter and other Poems.” It is preceded by three dedicatory stanzas to Professor Jebb.

The old classical story is briefly this:—While Demeter’s

daughter, Persephoné, was gathering flowers on the plain of Enna, in Sicily, suddenly the earth gaped, and Aidoneus, or Pluto, in his golden chariot, rose and bore off the maiden to be queen of the lower world. The place where he opened for himself a passage through the earth was said to be marked by the fountain Cyane. Disconsolate at her disappearance, Demeter wandered over the earth, of all inquiring tidings of her lost daughter. Discovering at length what had happened and that it had taken place with Zeus's sanction, she abandoned in her wrath the society of the gods and came down among men. There, under the guise of an old woman she nursed the infant son of an Eleusinian princess; but meanwhile the earth yielded no produce, for Demeter would suffer no increase. Then Zeus, missing the gifts and sacrifices of men, yielded, and it was arranged that Persephoné should spend two thirds of each year with her mother, and the remaining third with her husband Aidoneus. Hermes was sent to conduct Persephoné back from Hades, and she and her mother passed the time in delightful converse, and the earth once more bore its wonted fruits.

Persephoné is described by Homer as the wife of Hades (*i.e.* Pluto), and the formidable, venerable, and majestic queen of the Shades. The story of her abduction by Pluto is not referred to by Homer, but is first mentioned by Hesiod (*Theog.* 914). The Homeridian hymn in honour of Persephoné contains perhaps the earliest narrative of this event, which became a favourite theme with succeeding poets. Ovid has related it (*Met.* v. 341, etc.; *Fast.* iv. 417, etc.), and Claudian (*De Raptu Proserpinae*). Demeter was called Ceres, and Persephone Prosperina (or Proserpine) by the Romans.

The story is doubtless an allegory, Persephoné, carried away to the under-world, representing the seed-corn when it lies concealed in the ground; and Persephoné, restored to her mother, representing its reappearance above the soil. Or, more generally, she may be regarded as the symbol of vegetation, which shoots forth in the spring and summer, and the power of which withdraws into the earth at the other seasons of the year.

Tennyson, however, touches but lightly upon this phase of the story. It is incidentally alluded to in the lines (96, 97) where the great Earth-Mother is described as

"the Power

That lifts her (the Earth's) buried life from gloom to bloom," and again in the closing words of Demeter, where, addressing Persephoné, "Thou," she says,

"Henceforth, as having risen from out the dead,
Shalt ever send thy life along with mine
From buried grain thro' springing blade."

Tennyson's view is rather to make the Resurrection of Persephoné, when gods and men beheld

"The Life that had descended re-arise,"*

symbolical, as it were, of the dawn of a new era for mankind. Hitherto—as Zeus, the god of the bright heaven, has not scrupled to league himself with the King of "the sunless halls of Hades," to bereave the Earth-Goddess of her fair daughter; so Religion has allied herself with Terror and Punishment to deprive men of happiness and to afflict them with "the fear of Death and Hell." But, as "younger kindlier Gods,"

" Gods,
To quench, not hurl the thunderbolt, to stay,
Not spread the plague, the famine,"

are to succeed to the sovereignty of Heaven, and "all the Shadow" is to "die into the Light"; so a new and happier Religion is to arise for mankind, divested of its old attributes of gloom and dread, and the "worship which is Fear" is to become the "worship which is Love."

With this poem may be compared Jean Ingelow's verses entitled *Light and Shade*. Aubrey de Vere has a poem on the same subject.

NOTES.

1. a **climate-changing bird**, a bird of passage. The simile is a strikingly appropriate one, for Persephoné had changed the climate or "state" (see l. 7) of Hades for that of the earth; she had passed across the darkness of the lower to the light of the upper world; and she had come back to her native land. Cf. *The Passing of Arthur*, 38, 39:—

"Like wild birds that change
Their season in the night."

And *In Memoriam*, cxv. 15, 16:—

"The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood."

3. **threshold**, margin, border. The word in Middle English is *threshwold* = *thresh-wood*, the piece of wood that is thrashed or beaten by the feet of incomers.

4. **can no more**, can do no more, is quite exhausted. **thou camest** etc. Demeter throughout is addressing her daughter Persephoné.

5. **led upward** etc. Led from Hades to the upper world by Hermes (or Mercury). Hermes is called the "God of ghosts and dreams," because he marshals the ghosts to Hades (see ll. 25-27),

* Note the stately rhythm of this line.

and because, since dreams are sent by Zeus, he, as the ἡγήτωρ *hēgētōr* (leader of dreams), conducts them to man. The regular epithet of Hermes was *πομπαῖος*, 'escorting the souls of the dead'; he was also called *ψυχοπομπός*, 'conductor of souls.' Cf. Wordsworth, *Laodamia*, 18: "A god leads him (the phantom Protesilāus), winged Mercury."

6. **Eleusis**, a town of Attica, in Greece, famous for the great festival, called the Eleusinia, held there in honour of Demeter and Persephone.

8. **hither**, i.e. to Enna, a town of Sicily, surrounded by a beautiful plain. Cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, iv. 268-274:—

"Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flowers
Herself a fairer flower by gloomy Dis
Was gathered which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world . . .
. . . might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive."

10. **clouded memories**, memories clouded or dulled by her later sad experiences.

11. **thy lost self**. Her old consciousness was to be revived by the old surroundings. A sudden **nightingale** saw thee = on a sudden a nightingale saw thee.

12. **Saw thee, and flash'd** etc. Note how admirably the strong accent on *flash'd* and the trochaic run of the rest of this line express both the suddenness and the joyousness of the bird's song. See General Introduction, p. xix, (β). Scan:

"Sáw thee, | and flásh'd | into | a frólic | of sóng."

13. **a gleam**, a gleam of the new dawning consciousness.

16. **That shadow of a likeness**. Cf. Jean Ingelow, *Light and Shade*, 103-105:—

"The greater soul that draweth thee
Hath left his shadow plain to see
On thy fair face, Persephone!"

16, 17. **the king Of shadows**, Pluto, the king of the ghosts or spirits of the dead. Homer calls him *ἀναξ τῶν ἑρῶν*, king of those below.

19. **human-godlike**. The emphatic word is *human*. Her divine eyes had once more the light of the cheerful human world in them, which before had been shadowed by the gloom of Hades. For this compound, cf. *Lucretius*, 90, 'human-amorous.'

20. **Burst from** etc., broke out from a floating cloud of wintry-gray colour. Cf. *The Gardener's Daughter*, 256, 257:—

"The heavens between their fairy fleeces pale
Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleeting stars."

Vergil (*Georg.* i. 397) calls clouds *tenuia lanæ vellera*, 'thin fleeces of wool.' Cf. Lucan, *Pharsalia*, iv. 124: *vellera*, 'fleecy clouds.'

21. his day, his full radiance.

22. 'Mother!', the cry of Persephoné, as the old consciousness returns.

23. *disimpassion'd*, that have lost the passion they once possessed. The word implies more than 'unimpassioned.' Cf. 'disproved' and 'unproved,' 'disarmed' and 'unarmed' *Dispassionate* occurs in *A Character*, 28. Tennyson often prefers the prefix *dis-* to *un-*; thus he has *dislinked*, *disrooted*, *dishorsed*, *disyoke*. This is one of many references in Tennyson to the notion of *passionless* deity. Thus in *Lucretius*, 79, the gods are spoken of as "center'd in eternal calm."

25. the serpent-wanded power. The god Hermes, whose attribute was the *caduceus*, a rod entwined with two serpents. With it he conducted the souls of the dead to Hades.

26. Draw, moves slowly. Cf. l. 112, "drew down," and *Crossing the Bar*, 7, 8:—

"When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home."

Cf. 'to draw near,' 'to withdraw.' *drift*, is here 'thing driven'; cf. 'snow-drift.' The spectres were driven along by a wind. Cf. *The Passing of Arthur*, 31, where Gawain's ghost is "blown along a wandering wind." Dante (Cary's, *Purg.* V.) represents the spirits as arriving "before the ruinous sweep" of "the stormy blast of hell."

27. *flickering*, unsteadily gleaming through the darkness.

28. *race*, running waters, swift tide. Cf. *mill-race*, the current of water that drives a mill-wheel. *Phlegethon*, one of the four rivers of hell. The name means in Greek 'burning'; cf. Milton, *Par. Lost*, ii. 580, 581:—

"Fierce Phlegeton,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage."

30. *Life*, living being, living principle. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, 75, "Like a wounded life."

32. *childless cry*, cry caused by her childlessness. Note the transferred epithet.

35. *ablaze*, on blaze, in a blaze. Cf. 'abed,' 'ashore,' etc.

36. *that brighten* etc. Cf. *Maud*, I. xii. 6, "Her feet have

touched the meadows And left the daisies rosy"; and *Ibid.* l. xxii. 7:—

"From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes."

See l. 48, etc., below; and cf. *Ænone*, 94: "at their feet the crocus brake like fire," and note.

37. **black blur**, patch of dark earth on which no grass would grow. *Blur*, a stain, is another form of *blear*, to dim, as seen in *blear-eyed*.

38. **that closing chasm**. See Introduction. According to one story, Pluto opened a passage for himself through the earth by striking it with his trident.

39. **Aidoneus**, Pluto. It is a lengthened form of *'Aidōns*, Hades, which in Homer is invariably the name of the god, but in later times was transferred to his abode or kingdom, so that it became a name for the lower world itself.

43. **yawn... into the gulf**, open and disclose the chasm that it revealed before.

44. **shrilly**, poetic for *shrill*. So *stilly* for *still* ('the stilly night'—Moore), *vasty* for *vast* ('the vasty deep'—Shakspeare), *steepy* for *steep* ('the steepy cliffs'—Dryden). Tennyson has *dully* (adjective) in *The Palace of Art*, 275.

46. **midnight-maned**, with manes black as midnight.

47. **Jet**, dart, spring; Old Fr. *jetter*, Lat. *jactare*, to fling.

50. **the crocus-purple hour**, the time purple with crocuses; the spring-tide of bloom. See l. 36.

53. **cubb'd**, having cubs. Cf. *bearded*, *slipperd* (Shaks.), *landed*, *monted*, *moneyed*—all adjectives formed from nouns by the suffix *-ed*.

54, 55. **gave Thy breast to**, i.e. gave suck to, suckled. **thy**, the breast that had suckled thee.

56. **set the mother waking**, caused the mother to wake.

57. **whole**, hale, recovered. The *w* is a late (A.D. 1500) prefix to this word.

60. **shrill'd**, sounded shrilly. Cf. *Sir Galahad*, 5: "The shattering trumpet shrilleth high." Also *The Passing of Arthur*, 34, 42; *The Talking Oak*, 68; *Enoch Arden*, 175.

61-4. **We know not**, i.e. we know not where your loved one is. Nature, with her wind and wave voices, seems to sympathise with the bereaved mother, but it is with an unreasoning, unconscious sympathy, which only adds to her feeling of desolation.

64. **Where?** i.e. where is my loved one?

67. I stared from every eagle-peak. Cf. Keats, *Sonnet xvi*:
 "Like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
 He stared at the Pacific . . .

Silent upon a peak in Darien."

eagle-peak, peak haunted by the eagle, and so, lofty.

68. I thriddled, I passed through. *Thrid* is a doublet of *thread*.
 Cf. *A Dream of Fair Women*, 243 :—

"Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood."

heart, interior.

73. forlorn of man, deserted by mankind. Cf. *Ænone*, 15,
 "forlorn of Paris." Milton (*Par. Lost*, x. 921) has "forlorn of
 thee."

74. grieved for man etc., in the midst of my grief at your loss,
 I pitied man's miserable condition.

75. The jungle etc. With this picture of desolation compare
 that portrayed by Pope in his *Windsor Forest* :—

"The levelled towns with weeds lie covered o'er;
 The hollow winds through naked temples roar;
 Round broken columns clasping ivy twined;
 O'er heaps of ruin stalked the stately hind;
 The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,
 And savage howlings fill the sacred quires."

76. shaft, column, pillar; lit. something *shaven*, a smooth
 stick or pole.

80. following out, traversing to the end.

82. a gleaming rift, a bright rift or break in the darkness.
 From *rive*, to tear asunder.

84. we spin etc. The three Fates, or Parcae, were the
 arbiters of the life and death of mankind. They were generally
 represented as three old women (see L. 82), one of whom,
 Clotho, held a distaff; another, Lachesis, held a spindle, to "spin
 the lives of men"; and the third, Atropos, held a pair of scissors
 to cut the thread of human life.

86. There is a Fate beyond us. See below, ll. 127-130. The
 Parcae were the exponents of the decrees (*fata*) of Jove, and are
 represented by Horace (*Carm. Sec.* 25, 26) as singing "what has
 once for all been decreed." Cf. Vergil, *Ecl.* iv. 47: *Concordes
 stabili Fatorum numine Parcae*, 'the Parcae who are in harmony
 with the settled will of Heaven's decrees.'

87. as the likeness etc. Alluding to the stories of the spirit
 form of a person appearing at the hour of his death to a distant
 friend, as a warning of the dying man's approaching end.

89. friendship, friend ; abstract for concrete.

90. the God of dreams. See note to l. 5.

93. The Bright one, Zeus or Jupiter. Zeus, says Max Müller, is the same word as the Sanscrit *Dyaus*, derived from the root *dyu* or *div*, to beam ; while *dyu*, as a noun, means principally sky and day. (*Lectures on the Science of Language*, Vol. ii. Lecture x.)

94. the Dark one, Pluto. Zeus and Pluto were brothers, being sons of Kronos and Rhea. the lowest, the lowest region or Hades, just as the highest is the highest region or Heaven.

96. Earth-Mother. The name Demeter means 'Earth-Mother' (*δη* or *γη* *μήτηρ*), though Max Müller would connect *De* with *Dyāwā*, the Dawn. For the literal translation of a classical expression, cf. "tortoise" for *testudo* in *A Dream of Fair Women*, 27 ; "northern morn" for *aurora borealis* in *Morte d'Arthur*, 139, and *Talking Oak*, 275 ; "mother-city" for *metropolis* in *The Princess*, i. 111 ; "triple forks" for *trisulcum* (*fulmen*) in *Of old sat Freedom*, 15.

97. That lifts etc. Demeter was regarded as the protectress of the growing corn and of agriculture in general.

102. Their nectar etc. Nectar (=deathless) was the drink, and ambrosia (=immortal) the food of the gods. smack'd of, tasted of ; probably connected with *smack*, a sounding blow, or "a sound made by the sudden separation of the tongue and palate in tasting" (*Wedgwood*). Hemlock and aconite are poisons.

103. tasted aconite, had the taste of aconite ; a Latinism ; cf. *sapere mare* (Seneca), to taste of the sea. Cf. Homeric Hymn, 49-50.

105. their hard Eternities, these unfeeling Immortals. 'Their Eternities' is used as we say 'their Excellencies' of an Ambassador or a Viceroy. Cf. 'this Darkness' (l. 114) for 'this Dark one' or Pluto.

106. quick, fast-flowing.

110. Rain-rotten died, etc. Notice the alliterated compound ; see General Introduction, p. xx. With this picture compare Shakspeare's in *Mid. Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 93, etc. :—

"The green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard ;

.

Hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose."

112. Pale at my grief. Cf. Shaks. *Henry V.* iii. 5. 17-8 :—

"On whom, as in despite, the sun looks pale,
Killing their fruit with frowns."

113. *Ætna*, a mountain in Sicily, apparently not an active volcano in Homeric times. For sickening, of the sun, cf. Campbell, *The Last Man*, 11: "The Sun's eye had a sickly glare": and "a sickly sun" in *Aylmer's Field*, 30.

115. *still*, ever.

116. *fallow*, ploughed land left untilld; so called from its colour of pale yellow. The *fal* in *fallow* is the same as the *pal* in *pale*.

117. *steam*, the Homeric *κνίση*; cf. Homer, *Iliad*, i. 317: *κνίση δ' οὐρανὸν ἵκεν ἐλίσσομένη περὶ καπνῷ*, 'the steam (of the sacrifice) went up to heaven in a rolling cloud of smoke.' In the *Birds* of Aristophanes men are represented as paying honours to the birds and leaving off sacrificing to the gods, who are half-starved from the loss of the "wonted steam of sacrifice." Cf. Keats, *Hyperion*, I.:—

"Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up
From man to the sun's God."

119. *nine white moons*, i.e. nine bright happy months. See Introduction. Later writers represent the agreement as being that Persephoné should spend half of every year in Hades with Pluto and half in the upper world with Demeter. For *white* in the sense of 'happy,' cf. *Maud*, xlv. 8: "Twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white."

122. *by the landmark*, i.e. on the border of his land.

125. *grange*, farmhouse. See *Sir Galahad*, 81, note.

129. *to bear us down*. Cf. the prophecy of Prometheus in Æschylus, *Prom. Vinc.*, 928, etc.: *ἢ μὴν ἐνὶ Ζεὺς... ἔσται ταπεινός*, etc., 'Verily Zeus shall yet be brought low' etc.

130. *As we bore down* etc. Kronos and his brothers, the Titans, held the sovereignty of heaven, till they were dispossessed by his son, Zeus, and a new generation of deities. Cf. Keats, *Hyperion*, *passim*.

131, 132. *the thunderbolt ... the plague*. Among the Greeks, Zeus was the hurler of the thunderbolt, and Apollo was the inflicter of plagues.

133. *To send the noon* etc. Cf. Vergil, *Æneid*, viii. 243-246:—

"Non secus ac si qua penitus vi terra dehiscens
Infernas reseret sedes, et regna recludat
Pallida, dis invisā; superque immane barathrum
Cernatur, trepidentque immisso lumine Manes":

"As if the earth, gaping through some force within, were to unlock the infernal abodes and throw open the pale realms, hateful

to the gods ; while the vast abyss should be visible above, and the shades tremble at the entrance of the light "

136. the Shadow, the shadowy realm, the darkness.

138. grew beyond their race, reached a higher development than that of their fellow-men ; rose superior to ordinary human instincts.

139. against, in encountering, in their opposition to.

141. Queen of Death. See Introduction.

148. The Stone, the Wheel. The punishment of Sisyphus in Hades was to roll continually to the top of a hill a large stone, which fell back as soon as it reached the top. The punishment of Ixion was to be tied to a perpetually whirling wheel. Cf. *Lucretius, ad fin.* :—

" A truth

That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
And numbs the Fury's ringlet snake, and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal hell."

149. that Elysium, a region of green meadows and purling streams in the infernal world, where the souls of the virtuous were placed after death. The poet calls its lawns "dimly-glimmering," as being lighted by no bright earthly sun. The word *that* here means 'the well-known,' and implies dislike and repudiation ; it implies 'which you shall have escaped from for ever.'

151. field of Asphodel. The ἀσφοδελὸς λειμῶν, or asphodel meadow, was the haunt of the shades of heroes in Hades. See Homer, *Odyssey*, xi. 538, 539 ;—

ψυχὴ δὲ ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο
φοῖτα μακρὰ βιβῶσα κατ' ἀσφοδελὸν λειμῶνα ;

'The spirit of the swift-footed Achilles roamed with great strides over the asphodel meadow.' The asphodel is our King's-spear, a plant of the lily kind. Cf. *Ænone*, 95, and *The Lotos-eaters*, 170 :—

"Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel."

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